

Window on Jordan

Amusement arcades are attracting all-sorts

By Ghassan Jaha
Special to The Star
VISIT ANY of the numerous amusement arcade halls in Amman, and you will notice hundreds of teenagers playing, interacting and yelling at the machines. Haven't the summer holidays finished, one wonders?

So far, there are 415 amusement centers in Jordan, but this figure is rapidly rising, as shopowners have caught onto the fact that they encourage customers. The first amusement hall in Amman was opened 11 years ago, at the Housing Bank Complex.

But gaining entrance to one of the centers, or

owning a center for that matter, is strictly regulated by the Amusement Arcade and Luna Park Owners Association (AALPOA).

"No center will get a license unless all the regulations are fully complied with," said Ahmed Samkary, president of the AALPOA. The Association was founded four years ago but not everybody knew about it till last year. Its current location is at King Abdullah Gardens. "The Association's main objective is to promote the profession—our aim is to provide amusement and fun—so we don't just give licenses to anyone," he continued.

Samkary stressed that, "All arcade halls must be

at least 200 meters away from housing areas, schools, places of worship and welfare societies. The minimum age for owning a hall is 18. To gain entry, you need to be 15 or over, unless you are accompanied by your parents. Working hours are also regulated, except during holidays and public feasts when employees are allowed to work from morning until midnight.

The regulations are a necessity, as many arcade halls in the past were opened unlawfully, and caused a lot of public disturbances.

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The Star

Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly

Le Jourdain
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اسبوعية سياسية مستقلة

Africans Worry That Vaunted Rebirth May Be Stillborn

By Dean E. Murphy

NAIROBI, Kenya—Africans have been dying this summer on the battlefields of Congo. They have been dying at the border between Ethiopia and Eritrea, in South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal province and in simmering conflicts in Angola, Burundi, Guinea-Bissau, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda.

It took South African President Nelson Mandela, the continent's premier statesman, two weeks just to get Africa's leaders to sit at the same table to talk peace in Congo. In the meantime, neighboring countries took sides—and injected guns and soldiers—in the brutal civil war there.

Less than six months after President Clinton's historic tour of Africa touting "the beginning of a new African renaissance," many Africans worry that their continent's vaunted rebirth may be stillborn, or at the least, precariously premature.

These Africans now speak of an age of lost—rather than new—opportunities. Others, still upbeat about Africa's prospects, fear that the litany of recent setbacks is nonetheless exacting a costly public relations toll that could slow the momentum for change. The bad news, they complain, comes just as the world appeared ready to give Africa the benefit of the doubt for the first time since the continent's wave of independence in the 1960s.

The promise of the new era was grounded in a decade marked by unprecedented progress toward democracy and economic reform. But now, age-old scourges—wars and bloody political divisions, economic crises and disease—are once again dominating discourse from the Red Sea to the Cape of Good Hope.

The consternation and hand-wringing extends to policy-makers at the US State Department. US officials say Washington remains bullish on Africa, but the mood is noticeably subdued as the notion of a bona fide renaissance—crucial to the remaking of American perceptions of Africa—becomes a harder sell from Capitol Hill to Wall Street.

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Is the 1998 Press and Publication Law unconstitutional?

By Ibtisam Awadat
Star Staff Writer

SIX DAYS after the new Press and Publication Law (PPL) appeared in the daily newspapers, the council of the Jordan Press Association (JPA) held a press conference, with the aim of formulating a unified response. The call was spearheaded by the president of the JPA, Seif Al Sharif, and the president of the Professional Associations Council (PAC), Hassan Jaber.

Invitations went out to all interested parties. In the discussions, the JPA believed that the newly implemented press law contradicted an article in the Jordanian Constitution. If this contradiction is proved to be valid, the new law could well be contested in court on the grounds of its 'unconstitutionality'.

The problem appears to be in Article 15 of the 1952 Constitution, which stipulates that "the state guarantees the freedom of expression; every Jordanian has the right to freely express his views, whether by oral, written, photographic, and all other means of expression providing the borders of the law are not exceeded."

"In our meeting with Prime Minister Dr. Tarawneh, we acknowledged the new PPL, but we reserved our right to challenge it through all available channels," said Seif Al Sharif, president of the JPA.

A precedent has been set before as the JPA council filed a lawsuit against the 1997 Temporary Press and Publication Law to the Higher Court, and won the case. The law had been issued in the absence of Parliament, which the court acknowledged was unconstitutional.

What will be the solution this time? "One legal option is to let the courts determine the articles that contradict the Constitution, and for these to be annulled," said advocate Hani Dahleh.

He explained that normally the courts deal with temporary laws; however, the laws that have been endorsed by the legislature are a lot harder to refute. Dahleh told *The Star* that he has been invited by the Legal Committee of the Jordan Lawyers Association to try and find a legal solution to this dilemma.

In another move to counter the new law, deputies are trying

Deputy Nazih Ammarin has a more pragmatic view of things. "Even if we obtain the 10 signatures, it will not change things much at the moment," he said, "as parliament is dissolved now, which means that the petition will have to wait until the next ordinary session." Parliament is expected to hold an extraordinary session next week, but the agenda is limited to one item only: the vote of confidence for the new cabinet.

Regarding the possibility of filing a lawsuit against the new press law, Ammarin called for the establishment of a Higher Constitutional Court to solve situations of this kind.

"We respect the members of the Higher Committee for their interpretation of the Constitution, but what is really needed is an authority with greater powers," explained Ammarin.

Deputy Ahmad Ajameh highlighted that at the moment nothing had been submitted in writing, but that the discussions between the deputies would continue.

"We will discuss the possibility of taking tangible steps in the next ordinary session, if we find that the required number of concerned deputies."

However, it is not clear how will the new law fair in the next few months. What is known, however, is the amount of resentment it has caused from all quarters of society.

President of the Jordan Bar Association, Hussein Majali, expressed his anger at the law's implementation, which he said, "was more suited to the era of martial law, rather than today's supposedly free and democratic times."

He continued, "Governments should not consider the 'freedom of press' to be their own property; something which they can allow one day and prevent the next."



Aisha Mohammad Hamdy, 17, from the United Arab Emirates, waves from inside the cockpit of a Jordanian plane at Amman Marka airport, 9 September, one day after attaining her pilot's license from the Jordan Royal Aviation Academy. Hamdy claims she is the first woman pilot in the UAE.

Senator resignations attract controversy

By Star Staff Writer

THE RESIGNATION of four Upper House senators from the new cabinet has caused a stir inside the Lower House. Prime Minister Dr. Fayaz Tarawneh declared that the senators had effectively presented their resignations, but some sources are saying that these resignations were never submitted to His Majesty King Hussein. This is causing much speculation about the Government's real intentions.

The four senators concerned are: Jawdat Al Spoul, minister of justice, Tawfiq Krishan, minister of the municipal rural affairs and environment, Taher Kanaan, minister of state for development affairs and Nayef Al Qadhi, minister of interior.

Observers believe that the approval of these resignations could create a state of

separation between the legislative and executive authorities, and harm the prospects of deputies entering the cabinet in the future.

And this is why a lot of the deputies are backing off from their original demand to let the senators forgo their posts in the Upper House.

"I think it was unfair to oblige the senators to resign," said deputy Bassam Haddadin, who earlier said that the new government had mistreated the Lower House, when the Legislature was ignored during the formation of the new cabinet. "There is no constitutional justification for these resignations," Haddadin added.

But there are those who are sticking to their guns. "I believe that the two councils of Parliament should participate in the cabinet," said Deputy Dr. Ahmad Innab, "but I am

against the way the present Government was formed, since it lacks a well defined mechanism."

According to Dr. Innab, all the members of Parliament, both senators and deputies, should be consulted during the formation of the Government. "That's why I support the stance of those who asked for the resignation of the senators, because I disapprove of the way they were appointed in the first place," Dr. Innab added.

But some political observers say that the senators are more suited to cabinet positions than the deputies. "The senators constitute a part of the legislative authority, but you must not forget that they are appointed, and not elected like the deputies," said Deputy Mohammed Al Kouz.

"The role of the deputies is different; they are the

ones who are responsible for observing every move the Government makes," Al Kouz continued, "and if a deputy assumed the responsibility of any ministerial position, he could not carry out the duties he was elected for; namely, the fight against corruption, and the defense of the nation's and their constituent's interests."

Some analysts believe that the resignations of the senators were never submitted to His Majesty King Hussein, because Dr. Tarawneh is actively seeking support from the deputies before the vote of confidence in the coming extraordinary session of parliament.

By not submitting the resignations, Dr. Tarawneh is trying to keep the votes of those deputies who harbor ambitions to join the cabinet.

What is the Internet doing to us?

By John Schwartz

THE BURGEONING online medium has proved an irresistible subject of study for social scientists thrilled to see a new society emerging virtually overnight. Academics are examining every facet of online life for America's millions of Internet users, including the ways people use the medium, its successes and failures in education and medicine, the prospects for electronic commerce and the development of communities of people linked via modem.

But despite a great deal of research, "We know very little about how the Internet is actually affecting people's lives," said James E. Katz, a leading researcher in the field and professor in the Department of Communication at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

Last week a much-touted study from Carnegie Mellon University suggested

users of the Internet become lonely and socially withdrawn.

"The more people were online, the more signs they gave of being a little bit more socially isolated," in responses to standardized questionnaires used by researchers to measure depression, stress and strength of social ties, said Robert Kraut, the lead author of the study.

Reports on the study sparked a strong reaction in the online world from people like Arthur R. McGee, 32, an employee of a San Francisco-based Internet service provider for nonprofit groups. "Going back as far as I can remember, my use of [online communications] has greatly increased my human interaction," McGee said on WELL, a San Francisco, California-based online service. "I've met more people in person of varying ethnic and social backgrounds than I would have without these communication tools."

But computer author Robert Lauriston countered, "I think a lot of people are in denial about the negative effects of spending too much time online."

On the global conference system known as Usenet, Donna Gettings, 43, a manager of an at-home medical transcription service in Pittsburgh, quipped, "According to this survey, I guess I committed suicide some time ago."

The Carnegie Mellon study is part of HomeNet, a \$1.5 million project in which 93 Pittsburgh families were given free computers and Internet accounts. The three-year-old project has already published studies showing, for example, that use evolves from initial passive World Wide Web surfing to communication activities such as e-mail and Usenet. The group has shown that people who view pornography online tend to greatly decrease their porn surfing after the novelty wears off.

HomeNet, however, has its limits. The 169 participants are a small group and were not selected at random—two things that make it difficult to generalize any

study results to a larger population. The researchers also did not follow a "control," or similar group with no Internet access, generally considered an essential component of any such research. That the researchers only surveyed the participants twice—once before they went online, then a year later—is a serious weakness, said Donna L. Hoffman, a researcher at Vanderbilt University.

The Carnegie Mellon researchers themselves note the study's large population of teenagers, who tend to grow depressed and withdrawn, might have skewed the results. The new research is "not ready for prime time," Hoffman said. "This is not saying that the Internet does not cause depression," though she doubts it does because such a finding would "run counter to experience, anecdotal evidence, practice and scholarly research" like her own. "Maybe it does—but this research does not prove that."

The notion that Net use might cause depression "surprised us," said Carnegie Mellon.

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World Report

Amusement arcades are attracting all-sorts

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The AALPOA classifies the halls into two types: tourist (first class) and non-tourist. The center at the Housing Bank, for example, is classified as a tourist arcade.

Some centers are located in

the main commercial areas, like Taybat village in Al Wihdat, which is doing well. These halls have been given permission to attract school trips, and working hours have been extended to 12 hours per day. For the non-tourist centers, the regulations are more rigid.



Having fun at the arcade

There are some regulations that are universal, like the public image (cleanliness of the place and staff), and the capacity, which should be no less than 60 square meters.

Owning a center can be problematic as well. Approval is needed from a six-member committee, which consists of delegates from the governorate (where the hall is located), the Civil Defense Force, the Public Security Force, the Amman Municipality, Ministry of Social Development and the AALPOA.

Mr. Samkary denied allegations that video games are harmful to teenagers. "They actually help the young to develop and promote their reflexes and skills," he said.

Most of the teenagers, who are supposed to be above 15 expressed a similar point of view. However in most cases this is ignored. Eid, a 13-year-old pupil, is a regular at the HBC arcade. "I was ill at home, and my parents gave me permission to go and play and enjoy myself on the machines," he said. At the Jebel Weibdeh center, Mo'ayyad has the best attendance record, and prefers

to come during the school holidays or after school hours. He is 8 years old.

So are the AALPOA enforcing the age limit at arcade centers, or not?

"We can't prevent some under age people from coming in, but we are trying our hardest to ensure that this is not the norm," responded Mr. Samkary, in defence. He also denied that more and more teenagers are playing the games, and that some stay there for most of the day. "No one is allowed to spend more than one or two hours maximum at a time on these machines," he replied.

But Khalid Mighel knows what he is doing. The 30-year-old graduate, enjoys his time in the centers, and he is looking for a suitable place to open his own arcade hall. He is aware that not all arcade halls are a high-return investment, but he is still willing to take the risk.

Mr. Samkary, meanwhile, offered a final word of caution. "A lot of arcade halls have been closed over the past few months, because of low attendance rates," he says, "mainly because they were located in the wrong areas."

What is the Internet doing to us?

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Mellon study co-author William Scherlis. He was careful to note "the effects that we noticed are small, but they are statistically significant. It's not a big enough effect that if you use the Internet too many hours, you're going to wake up one morning and need a pre-

scription for Prozac." "These are relatively minor symptoms of depression," Kraut explained, "more like being in a funk than being suicidal."

Scherlis suggested simple changes could make Internet exploration a less solitary pursuit—moving the computer

from a basement office to the family room, for example.

Other researchers are examining the Internet with different results. Rutgers' Katz and colleague Philip Aspin, executive director of the Center for Research on the Information Society, surveyed 2,500 Internet users and found no evidence of social withdrawal. Online participants are no less likely to join religious, leisure or community organizations than people who aren't online, the research indicated.

Hoffman and partner Tom Novak at Vanderbilt University's Project 2000 have collaborated with researchers at Georgia Tech and others, and focus in part on consumers and what they find compelling in electronic commerce. Their

research, too, suggests many Web users consider being online to be both positive and enriching, leading to a satisfying mental state.

No one yet knows where various threads of research will lead, and Carnegie Mellon's Scherlis warns against reducing scientific results like his to a "bumper sticker" notion that the Internet is depressing or somehow dangerous and should therefore be controlled or restricted. The findings "should in no way give anybody an excuse to delay bringing the Internet into the home or into the schools or into the inner city—or anywhere else for that matter," he said.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

JTC offers new services

IN ORDER to meet with the modern facilities in the field of telecommunication, the Jordanian Telecommunications Company (JTC) started to offer its customers throughout the Kingdom nine additional services.

All the services are available to current customers, and those wishing to make a new subscription can choose the relevant services that best suit their requirements.

The new services include the call line identification presentation, abbreviated dialing, hot line, do not disturb, wake up, call transfer, customers code control bar-

ring, three-party call and call waiting.

Mr. Mamoun Balqar, director general of the JTC, pointed out that a few areas are unable to receive these services because they are not technically equipped yet. He mentioned that the company is willing to replace old switchboards with new ones. However, the customers who wish to receive the call line identification presentation are to make sure that they are connected on a new switchboard before they buy the new telephone sets. For more information, visit your nearest customer services department.

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ing in Congo.

When Mandela and UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan finally convened peace talks on Congo last week, Namibian President Sam Nujoma—whose troops are defending the Congolese government of President Laurent Kabila—didn't even show up. At the end of the breakfast meeting, it was Mandela who capitulated, suddenly endorsing the military intervention in support of Kabila.

Africans worry that vaunted rebirth may be stillborn

The regional talks resumed over the weekend without Mandela, and there were reports Monday that a tentative peace deal had been reached.

Even last month's terrorist attacks at the US embassies here and in neighboring Tanzania, in which Africans were innocent bystanders, helped create an image of a continent once again not in control of its destiny.

"The consequence of the bombings is that Africa could again become the battleground for ideological conflicts that originate outside the continent and where the majority of victims are in fact Africans," said Salih Booker, chief Africa specialist at the Washington-based Council on Foreign Relations. "It heightens the negative aspects of current perceptions of Africa."

Even with success stories in places such as Uganda, AIDS is exacting a toll on the continent that health officials predict will get far worse in the next few years; already, according to the United Nations, one in four adults in some parts of Africa is infected with the virus that causes the deadly disease.

Meanwhile, the continent's much-heralded economic and political turnaround, which followed the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, is beginning

to sputter in many countries. There are still shining lights in Africa—Mozambique, for example, after years of civil war now ranks No. 1 on an African "optimism index" compiled by the World Economic Forum—but the continent taken as a whole is struggling to maintain the momentum, economists say.

And in scenes reminiscent of days gone by, some old-style leaders—from Nujoma in Namibia to Daniel Arap Moi in Kenya to Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe—are clinging to their offices despite much-talked-about democratic reforms and celebrated examples of democratic succession, most notably former Botswana President Festus Mogae, who stepped down in April after 18 years, and Mandela's announced retirement next year.

In another flash from the past, opposition protesters in the mountain kingdom of Lesotho last month took Prime Minister Palesitha Mosisile hostage in Parliament before they were dispersed by police with rubber bullets and water cannons. It appears that the ruling party, unwilling to give up power, may have tampered with recent election results after winning only a fraction of the vote. In another incident, last week out-

side the Royal Palace, one person was killed and more than a dozen wounded when gunmen opened fire on several hundred protesters.

The creeping sense of pessimism couldn't have come at a worse time for Africa's economic rebirth, which politicians and independent analysts agree is essential for the continent to make a clean break with the past.

With the world economy in turmoil because of crises in Asia, Latin America and Russia, Africa was poised to bene-

fit from the phalanx of international investors scouring the globe for safer emerging markets. According to the World Bank, sub-Saharan Africa receives just \$12 billion of the \$300 billion in annual foreign private capital flows to the developing world, and less than a quarter of that comes in the form of direct investment.

Officials say there is no evidence of a mass exodus of investment from Africa, but some government and business leaders here and abroad admit to holding their breath.

"It is too early to really tell what will happen," a US official said. "We all have our fingers crossed."

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

For the Record

Get well messages
MAYO CLINIC (Pera)—His Majesty King Hussein on Tuesday received a phone call from Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh inquiring about the health of His Majesty the King and wishing him a speedy recovery. The two leaders discussed also the distinguished bilateral relations between the two countries and exchanged views regarding current Arab issues. His Majesty King Hussein, Monday, also received a phone call from Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, during which President Mubarak was reassured over the health of His Majesty.

Yeltsin receives Jordanian House Speaker
MOSCOW (Pera)—Russian President Boris Yeltsin received on Monday Speaker of Jordan's Lower House of Parliament Sa'ed Hayel Srour, who heads the Jordanian parliamentary delegation to the International Parliamentary Union currently being held in Moscow. Mr. Srour relayed His Majesty King Hussein's and HRH Crown Prince Hassan's greetings to the Russian President, who in turn expressed his appreciation of the King and the Crown Prince.

Crown Prince welcomes Abbas

AMMAN (Pera)—His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Tuesday received Secretary of the PLO's Executive Committee Mahmoud Abbas. The discussions focused on the efforts exerted to revive the peace process in the Middle East. The two sides discussed also the outcome of moves taken by all parties regarding the implementation of the American proposals, which call for a 13 percent withdrawal from the West Bank. Prince Hassan reiterated Jordan will continue to exert its utmost efforts to support the Palestinians in establishing their independent state on their national soil. He stressed that Jordan would spare no effort in working towards a just and comprehensive peace. Abbas thanked His Royal Highness for the efforts and moves Jordan is carrying out in support of the Palestinian people in their endeavor to achieve their legitimate rights. During the discussions—which came on the eve of the visit by the American Middle East envoy, Dennis Ross, to the region—it was agreed that the meeting of the Jordanian Palestinian Joint Committee should be held soon.

Sudanese Director General of Health visits Jordan

AMMAN (Pera)—Director General of the Sudanese Health Ministry Dr. Issam Iddin Mohamed Abdullah said that his visit to Jordan complemented a recent visit by the Sudanese Health Minister, which led to an agreement to enhance cooperation between the two countries in health related fields. "The visit also aims at examining possibilities of benefiting from Jordanian medical expertise, with a special focus on medical training in the fields of quality control, health care and vocational health," Mr. Abdullah said, during a visit to the Data Center at the Ministry of Health on Tuesday.

Troy holds training workshop

A training workshop was held in the TROY Company for its staff last week. The workshop was held in cooperation with the "ROYAL" parent company in Italy, and attended by Mr. Lorenzo Vico, the Company General Manager and Dr. Atsoo who talked in the workshop about the new "Ranovage line" which is being introduced in Jordan. Ranovage are products for skin treatment. The winter '98 evolution collection was presented at the venue.



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services

Beware!! Old switches are not capable of offering some services

JORDAN

W E E K



An unconventional report on Jordanian news and views edited by Marwan Al Asmar

Life imprisonment

■ The Greater Criminal Court sentenced a man who killed his wife and four children to life imprisonment with hard labor this week. The court found Awad Mohammad Abd Rabboh guilty of killing his family in Karak earlier this year. Abd Rabboh was married for 10 years and had two boys and five girls. He killed his wife because he suspected her of "crying on" and killed his children because he said that they were "not his."

Land

■ Something dangerous could be brewing this week: the selling of Palestinian land to Israelis. The issue is creating much controversy in Jordan, especially since Faisal Al Hussein, the PNA man in charge of the Jerusalem file, accused Jordanian lawyers of facilitating such land transactions to Israel. This has sparked widespread protest from lawyers on this side of the divide. President of the Jordan Lawyers Association, Hussein Mjalli, urged Mr Hussein to provide names and facts. He said that the Association is completely against such behavior, and anyone found dealing in such sales would be severely dealt with.



Mjalli

Aids

■ The killer disease. Twenty-six foreigners were deported from this country recently after they were tested positive for the Aids virus. However, the number of Aids patients is still increasing. Eight more Aids cases were discovered bringing the total to 191. What is revealing is that 22 people below the age of 18 have contracted the disease; three of these are younger still, below the age of 5. Most of the Aids cases are in Amman, followed by Zerqa and Irbid. However, the World Health Organization has different figures, due probably to the different accounting methods. They say that there are 600 HIV-positive and AIDS carriers in Jordan.

Reds!

■ Just to keep you posted. Problems are still going on inside the communist movement in this country. The Minister of Interior, Nayef Al Qadhi, is still refusing to intervene, saying the communists must iron out the differences themselves. However General Secretary of the Communist Party, Munir Hamarneh is threatening to go to court if Yacoub Zayadeen's splinter group insist on using the same name.

Arson

■ Not even politicians are spared. Parliamentary deputy for the Ma'an constituency, Dr Walid Awajan, had his house broken into and burnt this week. The thieves got away with electrical goods from the house. However, he denied that there were political motives behind the arson, as Awajan says "he has very good relations with his constituents."

A day in the life of a Parliamentary deputy Al Baqa'a camp welcomes Kharabsheh

By Ibtisam Awadat
Star Staff Writer

SHE IS called the "Mother of the Orphans." She sells home-made white cheese in her shop—a colorless one-room affair. The tracks of time are easily noticeable on Umm Faris' face, and she looks 10 years older than her real age. She lives in Al Baqa'a Camp, and had to struggle hard to bring up her children.

That's why Umm Faris took the advantage of the recent tour by Parliamentary deputy Mahmoud Al Kharabsheh to the camp—she simply asked him to find a job for her son. The Star accompanied Kharabsheh on his tour.

Kharabsheh's normal day begins early. He starts by receiving his constituents in Parliament, and deals with topics ranging from family disputes to weddings. Most of his political meetings are made during the day or in the evening.

Today, and since the Lower House is not in session, Kharabsheh is taking advantage of this "extra time," and doubled his local appearances. He is welcomed at the camp as soon as people recognize him, receiving handshakes and



Kharabsheh (2R), in discussion with residents of the Baqa'a Camp

offers of hospitality. The camp—which makes up a large part of the Baqa'a constituency—has Palestinian refugees and expatriates, and is estimated to have reached 100,000 individuals.

"Abu Mohammed (Kharabsheh) is a son of the camp," said Abu Halawa, the owner of a supermarket at the camp's entrance. "We asked our deputy to call for major improvements in infrastructure," said Omar Tabaza, owner of Al

Baqa'a Pharmacy. "The unemployment rate needs to be addressed as well, as young people hang around in gangs with nothing to do except fight among themselves and harass pedestrians," Tabaza added.

Right in the center of the camp, Kharabsheh found himself surrounded by all sorts of people. Judging from the discussion that followed, it proved that the ordinary man in the street is very aware, politically, economically and socially.



Calling in at the chemists

Photos by Mahmoud Shawkat

Press Cocktail



Noise pollution!

■ Ibrahim Al Samman's article in *Al Ra'i* this week was about a new kind of pollution: noise pollution is not a new subject, but has been long tackled in the West. Writing on this issue however, is a relatively new thing in Jordan. There are many kinds of noise pollution; indeed, today's modern world is based on noise, and a lot of the things we do have a "noise-related element". Al Samman however, talks about a particular form of noise pollution: music and its harm on hearing. He states that it is accentuated by dance parties, wedding feasts, and simply loud music. Such "noise pollution" can lead to deafness. "Modern technology is at the core as many musical instruments have amplifiers and sophisticated sounds which are directed at those 'miserable audiences'." Al Samman adds. He urged people, rather unrealistically, to stop using these and go back to the ear-friendly tambourine and drums.

Cancer in Ajlun

■ In his column in *Ad Dastour*, Jihad Momani wrote about the alarming high rates of cancer patients in the Ajlun area. He said that the area is well-known for its beautiful mountains and pure water, and that it is a shame to have such rates. The sad thing, he says, is that people have come to regard such rates as a *fait accompli*. We must all know by now, he said, there is a real connection between these figures and the factories and industries in Israel, which produce chemicals and radioactive materials. The proximity between Israel and Jordan makes the environmental correlation very real. "Waste" for example could very well travel in the atmosphere. He urged the government to act rapidly. Cancer rates are rising and what is needed is a national awareness campaign.

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Our Say...

Calling the Western bluff

IT IS quite easy to interpret Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi's refusal of the Anglo-US offer to hold the Lockerbie trial in the Netherlands on Sunday as a characteristic response. But that would be unfairly prejudging the man and the issue. Qadhafi's anti-Western rhetoric is familiar, and we do not always agree with him. But we cannot fault the logic of his stance in the present issue.

He pointed out that Libya was not a party to the agreement which involved only the UK, the US and the Netherlands, and therefore it was not binding on his country. Secondly, Qadhafi demanded that the Netherlands should not serve as a "transit point", and that there should be guarantees that the Libyan suspects will not be sent to Scotland in the case of a conviction. It should be recalled that the Anglo-American agreement to hold the trial in the Netherlands—something which Libya was insisting consistently—was not a conciliatory gesture, but was a sort of a veiled threat to Libya to accept or pay the price. It makes sense therefore, that Qadhafi should seek legal and diplomatic guarantees.

The Lockerbie episode was a human tragedy—288 passengers were killed when the PanAm plane exploded in midair over Scotland in 1988—but the Americans and the British turned into a political campaign against Libya and Qadhafi. They were keen on making the point that Qadhafi's anti-West stance included covert support for terrorists. But it remains a charge which is yet to be proved.

On the other hand, according to a recent admission of a former mole in Britain's MI5—which deals with internal espionage—the British government was involved in a plot to assassinate Qadhafi. There is no similar case which could be made against Qadhafi or Libya. The belligerent tone of the statements made by British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook and US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright exposes the brittle logic of the Anglo-American charges.

If the British and the Americans are keen on a fair trial, they must agree to the rational demands made by Qadhafi. They must guarantee that the Libyan suspects would not be whisked away to a Scottish prison. True, the case is to be tried by a Scottish judge under Scottish law, but if it is to be credible there should be ample display of neutrality in the procedures.

What is implied in Qadhafi's demand is this sense of fair play: which the Americans and the British are anxious to push under the carpet, and they want to use the trial not only prove the guilt of the two suspects but also the involvement of the Libyan government and that of Qadhafi. The Libyan leader is merely calling the Western bluff of a fair trial.

Regional entity and parochial isolation

By Khairi Janbek

GEOPOLITICS IS a term frequently used to cover many issues relating to territory and politics. Jordan is subject to geopolitical considerations at the moment—the region itself is looking for a new identity, and HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, is at the forefront of this search.

This identity must be rescued from the narrow interpretations that rotate within the context of the overall Arab-Israeli conflict. Isolationism has never been the answer to anything. The propagators of the policies of fear, site economic reasons for keeping smaller countries apart, and they claim that Jordan would be swarmed by more effective and superior economies. However, by finding a common identity, will it not be easier to business?

The Crown Prince has often spoken about water shortages, economic problems, and refugee issues which are threatening to destabilize the whole region.

Surely, the most realistic method to resolve such issues, is to re-define our region: to eliminate all causes of friction between countries in the Middle East, to establish clear relationships based on respect and cooperation, and the mutual need of each other.

Obviously, peace and stability are at the core of this regional identity, and it goes without saying that it is a just and durable peace that is desired. It is important to project our ideas beyond the current inter-regional factions and conflicts, because only then we will be able to perceive the benefits that can be reaped by all, especially Jordan.

This fits in well with the Jordanian stance—declared openly and on more than one occasion—that the Jordan-Israel peace agreement should serve the whole Arab World; to achieve, once and for all, a just and comprehensive peace for all concerned.

Such a desirable and needed peace, will by definition shed a



Will the move to 'Geopolitics' lead to a fair bite of the apple for everyone?

new light on our area. Rather than many individual countries, competing and vying for investments without much success, and without a credible market for distribution, there would be a new unified trading bloc.

In this formula, Turkey features very highly on the regional agenda. It is a country with cultural depth, economic strength and expertise, and more importantly, one foot in Europe. Unfortunately, it is encircled with tense relations on all its borders, and an ongoing insurgency by Kurdish communist rebels. Turkey, a country at the heart of the Near East, with strong traditional and his-

torical relations with the Arab world, must feel secure enough to pursue these relations, as well as expand and develop its economic base in the region. Turkey should become a major partner in our re-defined area.

Political divisions and differences must become a thing of the past, and play second fiddle to the more important factor of cementing relations between our neighbors. Turkey has the greatest supply of water in this region and her experience in transporting water (to Cyprus) and in desalination plants are worthy of incorporation into our politically-fractious free Near East.

As for Iran, a fraternal Islamic country, it must reconcile itself to the norms of the international community, and take its rightful place in the New East, among its brothers and neighbors. Its natural position—key to the new Islamic Republics from the old USSR—should be beneficial. Iran's importance cannot be denied, and it should re-occupy this position as soon as possible.

This is a vision of a new Silk Road. A road leading to countries with highly developed infrastructures, with new commodities and services replacing the old, traditional dependency on conventional sources of wealth. And at the heart of it

Middle East Beat by Khairi Janbek Tension in Asia

IT IS surprising that the escalation in tension on the Afghan border took so long to flare-up. The war of proxies was bound to turn into a full stage of conflict. Now Iran is being pulled in. This is especially after the Taliban occupation of Mazar-i-Sharif and the disappearance of Iranians in the area.

The cauldron of Afghanistan, which is already boiling with Pashtun, Tajik, Uzbek militia, Tajik tribes, Shiite Afghan fighters, Wahabi missionaries, and of course, Bin Laden, looks to be filled with Pasdaran Revolutionary guards, and Basij militia facing the situation.

But it's important to consider the regional configuration at this point in history, especially since Uzbekistan and Tajikistan are now independent republics, and most assuredly wish to keep the war inside Afghanistan, rather than have it transported across their territories.

Pakistan, a main influence on the Taliban, with new nuclear capability, is likely to use this factor as a trump card if the threat of further violence threatens to become of a regional dimension, while the USA's omnipotent presence remains still obscure under the circumstances.

Although tension between Iran and Afghanistan had been increasing in the last few weeks because of Iranian fears that Taliban could threaten their national security; yet it seemed that everyone was wishing that it would not turn to military confrontation.

We are living in the age of copy-cat wars which already started in Africa—conflicts between Rwanda and Burundi, and now the Congo. What is disturbing in the Afghan case is that the conflict is closer to home and carrying the dimensions of potential domino-wars. There are nuclear weapons in this scenario.

Perhaps, the Islamic world and the international community could have acted earlier to at least manage the conflict, if not resolve it, and not to leave it as a convenient example of Islamic violence, while turning a blind eye to the profits made out of transporting weapons. Perhaps a major disaster can be averted before it's too late.

The US may consider any Iranian action in Afghanistan as tantamount to expansionism, unless there is an implicit consent to teach the Taliban a lesson—many in the region do not have much sympathy with the Taliban. However, Iran must not misread America. Despite the fact that the Afghan question may seem academic, it may become controversial just because it is Iran that is taking the action.

Iran must be careful since it is trying to mend fences with the international community. Pakistan, may also feel that Iran should not have a free hand in Afghanistan, especially if there are power centers in the country who feel that Afghanistan is their own domain of operations.

All these are possibilities, each with their own daunting prospects. For Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, it would depend on the escalation of military operations, and a threat to their borders. They are not expected to stay put and wait.

Also, and most importantly, the western media has started adding to the escalation of tensions by identifying what is happening as a conflict between Sunnis and Shiites.

What has not been said, is that Muslims are the only ones who can prevent further Muslim deaths.



A Palestinian policeman lights the cigarette of an Israeli soldier during a joint patrol in the southern Gaza Strip.

Palestinian police Colonel Abu Al-Ula gestures as he speaks with an Israeli soldier during a joint patrol in the southern Gaza Strip near the Jewish settlement of Kfar Darom. Ula is commander of the Palestinian military liaison unit in charge of "Joint Patrols" with Israeli soldiers. The patrols were set up as part of the 1993 Oslo peace accords and are supposed to both enhance security and foster trust on both sides. Abu Al Ula questions "where is the trust" on the fifth anniversary of the Oslo accords. Photograph taken 8 September, 1998.

Reuters

Between Jihad and Salaam: Profiles in Islam by Joyce M. Davis, St. Martin's; ISBN: 0312165870 Hardcover, pp272 pages 1997, \$32 approx.

IN AMERICA, the most prevalent exposure to Islamic world leaders has been limited to the brief TV sound bites of just a handful of individuals. In this work, Davis presents us with a compelling and considerably more in-depth perspective of 17 key figures from Islamic countries around the world. Her format is to offer a biographical sketch, focusing on the major issues the person has been involved in, and then a transcript of an interview, letting the subject speak for him- or herself.

A reviewer from Booklist says the result is both fascinating and informative. The reader receives a glimpse into the lives of intelligent, articulate, and dedicated leaders, who often disagree with each other on fundamental issues. From countries as diverse as Jordan, Pakistan, or Indonesia, Muslims candidly express opinions that are sometimes reassuring to the West and sometimes very challenging.

Davis, a deputy senior foreign editor for National Public Radio in the US, has traveled



Muslims from all over the world congregate during the hajj pilgrimage

extensively through Islamic countries and is well versed in their cultures and histories. Highly recommended.

But the journalist's promising venture to interview representatives of Islamic political movements fails to deliver as much insight as it should. Davis

spoke to many people from Algeria to Indonesia (Iran, Afghanistan, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia are notably absent).

An earlier review from Kirkus Reviews in the US says it's refreshing to see an American journalist skip the think tanks and head straight to the nebu-

lous "Islamic militants," who turn out to be ordinary individuals—including a scholar, a relief administrator, a judge, genuine militants, and a number of outspoken women.

The transcribed interviews, mostly conducted in an English of a sometimes rudimentary quality, are each preceded by a profile of the subject, too frequently in the difficult cases culminating in a noncommittal "maybe good, maybe bad" conclusion, or falling back on formulaic lamentations about hatred and extremism.

In the ruling theme of the encounters, the mixture of religious zeal and political power alarms Davis, not unjustifiably, as a representative of "the West." But the question of what Western interests really are is never straightforwardly addressed. Habib Chirzin, the figure most congenial to Western civilization in Davis's eyes, is a member of a movement connected to a secular dictatorship—Indonesia.

Without a more informed historical and social context, these profiles don't quite escape the West's flat mental grid of figures here hints at the true complexity of contemporary Muslim thought and practice.



Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak listens to Israeli envoy Danny Naveh at Isha-deya Palace in Cairo, 9 September. Israel wants Egypt to put pressure on the Palestinians in the peace negotiations.

Reuters

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Business scene

Japan and Jordan signed an agreement granting Jordan 7.422 billion Japanese Yen (US\$ 63 million) to finance the second phase of supplying Greater Amman area with water through upgrading water pumps from Deir Alla and Zay. The total capacity of the Zay station will reach 90 million cubic meters per year.

Japan financed the first phase of the project with a grant of US\$ 11.3 million in 1996. In addition, technical aid was offered by Japan to support studies related to water in Jordan.

The overall amount of Japanese grants to the Kingdom's water sector has now reached nearly US\$ 81 million.

The National Consumer Protection Society denounced the Government's decision to expand the scope of the sales tax, stating that it will add to the extra burdens shouldered by the consumers.

Some merchants and suppliers warned that such a step would definitely lead to a price rise in services and products, estimated at 10% at least. The decision applies to all sectors including restaurants, hotels, food and drink manufacturers, real estate offices, tourist car rental offices, transport and computers, to name but a few.

President of the Society, Dr. Mohammed Obaidat called for the consumer considerations to be taken into account before any approval is given.

Under the auspices of HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the 22nd ordinary session of the Council of Central Banks and Arab Monetary Establishments opened last week.

Participants discussed the 1998 Arab consolidated economic report which deals with major economic and social developments in the Arab countries during 1997, as well as their banking and monetary status, and the prospects of cooperation in the investment flow from and to Arab markets.

The experiment of Jordan's monetary policy in the light of the economic readjustment plan was also highlighted. Moreover, the participants discussed the impact of dealing in the Euro-currency and its expected influence on the exchange and interest rates, and the Arab economies as a whole.

Foreign Exchange

	Buy JD	Sell JD
US \$	0.7080	0.7100
£	1.1510	1.1568
DM	0.4124	0.4145
SFr	0.4801	0.4825
FRF	0.1227	0.1233
YEN (100)	0.5624	0.5652
DEL	0.3667	0.3685
LIT (100)	0.0419	0.0421

First investors conference convenes amidst high expectations

By Ilham Sadeq
Star staff writer

TODAY, THE catchword in business is 'high tech', but this does not mean that the human resource should be forgotten. The expertise and ability of the workforce plays a major part in sustaining development and prosperity for all nations.

Jordan is well placed when it comes to the quality of the work-force; in terms of qualifications, expertise and skills. His Majesty King Hussein has stressed on many occasions that the human being is the most precious resource of all.

This fact was underlined by HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, during the opening session of the 1st Business and Investment Conference held at the Cultural Palace on Monday. "Had I been asked to give a slogan for this huge gathering, I would have suggested 'partnership'," Prince Hassan said.

An energetic investor attending the conference reiterated the Crown Prince's view. "We are all partners and have to shoulder our responsibilities and tasks together, to promote investment and to ensure capital is brought back into the Jordanian market from outside."

The conference is being attended by around 1000 businessmen and women, from both Jordan and abroad. Out of this number, there are around 600 expatriates from the business and investment world, from 30 Arab and foreign countries—all the participants were enthusiastic about developing Jordan's economy.

The five-day venue is being co-sponsored by the Jordan Businessmen Association (JBA) and the Investment Pro-



HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, addresses the delegates at the opening session of the 1st Business and Investment Conference, which opened in Amman on Monday

motion Corporation (IPC). Both bodies shouldered a lot of responsibility in preparing for the conference.

Referring to the conference, Mr. Hamdi Tabbara, the JBA's president said, "This is a big gathering of the economic family—from inside and outside the Kingdom—and is convened at a critical stage in the history of the Arab world." Mr. Tabbara highlighted Jordan's economic achievements since implementing the economic reform plan, which removed distortions in the monetary and financial policies. The Investment Promotion Law and enhancing the role of the private sector in sustaining devel-

opment were also mentioned as well. "In a world that is moving fast towards globalization, it is imperative that we upgrade our products. We must do our best to minimize the risks of this strategy, ensuring at the same time that we are able to meet the stiff competition that lies ahead," Mr. Tabbara pointed out. He also stressed that priority should be given to inter-Arab cooperation, by removing the barriers confronting the movement of goods among Arab states. JBA's president then called for the lifting of sanctions on Iraq. The Minister of Industry and Trade, Mr. Mohammed Saleh Horani, said the conference is

operating as a team, the Crown Prince commented on the water crisis, and the Government's recent proposal to establish a public shareholding water company in which all investors have an equal interest. The step would not only generate profit, but also embody the 'group spirit'.

Speaking on behalf of the expatriate business community, Mr. Khatlan Fahmawi stressed, "Jordan is a part of our homeland and we feel its problems, so all what we ask is for you to give consideration to our proposals, aimed at boosting a healthy investment climate that guarantees positive results." Introducing a new commercial law to allow fast and efficient arbitration, was one of his suggestions. In addition, Mr. Fahmawi asked for the establishment of an independent authority for investments, having powers and directly linked to the Prime Minister to remove routine obstacles that hinder investments. Other requests, included introducing training programs to help speed up of the handling of investor's documents, reviewing the tax and customs laws, and establishing a Business Council abroad for those residing outside Jordan.

Mr. Jameel Jabran, another participant, hoped that this meeting would lay the basis for more meetings, aimed at gathering the business community together, to combine efforts for the sake of Jordan's economy.

Mr. Jabran, President of the Investors Society at the Sahab industrial area, pointed out some difficulties faced by investors; notably, the small size of the Jordan market and the prevailing recession.

Dr. Sameeh Shalabi, attending from Saudi Arabia, wanted priority to be given to commercial ties with Arab countries, and called on all governments to exempt industrial imports from taxes, ease bureaucratic measures, and to encourage greater private sector involvement through greater incentive schemes.

The conference will conclude its business tomorrow (Friday), and the results are eagerly expected.

PepsiCo sells off Polish chocolate business for \$77m

By John Willman Christopher Bobinsky

PEPSICO, THE US drinks and snacks group, has sold the chocolate business of Wedel, its Polish subsidiary, to Cadbury Schweppes, the UK confectionery and soft drinks group, for \$76.5m in cash.

The acquisition means that Cadbury Schweppes is now Poland's largest chocolate producer, with 28 percent of the market ahead of rivals such as Nestle, Mars and Kraft Jacobs Suchard.

PepsiCo is also in negotiations with a second UK group, United Biscuits, over the disposal of the Wedel biscuit operation. The two Wedel businesses were expected to bring in around \$200m when they were put up for sale in June.

The disposal is part of PepsiCo's strategy of focusing on soft drinks and salty snacks. The US group said it planned to invest another \$200m over the next few years in Poland to expand its Frito-Lay snacks operations and its Pepsi Cola drinks business.

PepsiCo bought a 40 percent stake in Wedel in 1991 for \$24m and acquired the remaining shares this year. The sale of its biscuits operation to United Biscuits would complete a complex package of deals between the two companies that began last year when UB

currently has under 20 per cent of the Polish market through the 80 per cent stake in San, the biscuit maker, it bought in 1994 for £19.1m (\$32m), against competition from Baltha of Germany and BSN; the French group now known as Danone. San is based at Jaroslaw in the south-east of Poland, close to the border with Ukraine.

Acquisition of the Wedel biscuits division would give UB a market share of more than 40 per cent, which could fall foul of the regulators.

There is concern in Poland over the domination of consumer markets by western groups.

Poland is one of the largest markets for chocolate bars in Europe. Sales of chocolate have been growing at an average of 17 per cent a year since 1990. Wedel's Warsaw confectionery factory, with 1,100 employees, produced sales of 302m zlotys (\$81m) last year.

The sale of both Wedel businesses is being handled for PepsiCo by ABN Amro Corporate Finance, part of the Dutch banking group.

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Crown

ROYAL JORDANIAN
Reflecting the Change

MARKET WATCH 3-6 September

Highest and lowest performing stocks in the Amman Financial Market

SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
* Philadelphia Bank * Rafia Plastic Industry % 5.00 5.00	* International Textile % 5.88	* Sea Insurance * National Industry % 5.38 5.41	* Al Lulo Insure % 5.00
* National Industry % 5.13	% 5.13	% 5.13	% 5.13
General Price Pointers 182,730	180,550	179,480	178,010
Trade Volume 1,004,226	873,952	851,261	1,339,490
Stock Volume 741,029	647,681	671,901	659,821
Highest Traded Stocks * Arab Bank 181,150	* Arab Bank 395,995	* Arab Bank 203,530	* Arab Bank 444,435

All data provided by ACCESS Tel: 646868 Fax: 646949

Suha Bishara released after long sentence but remains unrepentant

Four mothers battle to end the bloodshed

By Rebecca Trounson

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM—From the window of the college classroom where she teaches, Rachel Ben-Dor often sees military helicopters ferrying young Israelis off to fight in southern Lebanon. Each time, she prays that her own son, now 21 and serving in the army, is not among them. But sometimes, she knows, he is.

"We have been fighting in south Lebanon for so many years," said Ben-Dor, 42, a lecturer in Jewish studies at a small college near Israel's northern border. "We need to bring our sons home and solve our problems with the Lebanese—but not by war."

Ben-Dor is not alone in her frustration over Israel's costly occupation of a strip of southern Lebanon and the mounting toll exacted in battles there with Lebanese Shiite guerrillas. Israel invaded Lebanon in 1978 and 1982 to halt cross-border attacks by Palestinian guerrillas. Since 1982, 864 Israeli soldiers have died in Lebanon. Of those, 227, including 11 this year, have been killed since the army withdrew in 1985 to the 9-mile-wide swath that Israel calls its "security zone."

A year-and-a-half ago, Ben-Dor gathered three friends, all mothers of young soldiers serving in Lebanon, at her home in the town of Rosh Pina. Seventy-three more Israeli soldiers had just been killed in the collision of two helicopters en route to Lebanon, and the women were determined to try to stop the bloodshed.

They launched a movement to demand that Israel pull all troops out of Lebanon—even without a peace agreement with the government in Beirut, or with Syria, the main power broker in Lebanon.

They called it Four Mothers, after the biblical matriarchs Rachel, Sarah, Leah and Rebekah. The group has grown to several hundred active members, including fathers of soldiers, former soldiers, students and others who have no direct connection to the conflict. It has collected more than 20,000 signatures—including that of the wife of a former commander of Israeli forces in Lebanon—on petitions that call for a unilateral and unconditional withdrawal. And it holds frequent demonstrations near the Defense Ministry in Tel Aviv and outside the home of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

For member Lea Horvich, what she views as the futility of Israel's long occupation of southern Lebanon struck home again last month when several towns in northern Israel came under a cross-border rocket barrage by Iranian-backed Hezbollah.

lah guerrillas. Nineteen people were hurt in the attack.

"The Israeli soldiers in Lebanon cannot defend the north," said Horvich, a Jerusalem high school teacher whose 22-year-old twins are in the army. "The policy of keeping soldiers there to protect people in the north is not working. We have to leave," she said.

The mothers say that withdrawing troops from Lebanon would remove the Lebanese guerrillas' motivation to attack Israel but still leave the government with the ability to launch a powerful counter-strike to any cross-border violence.

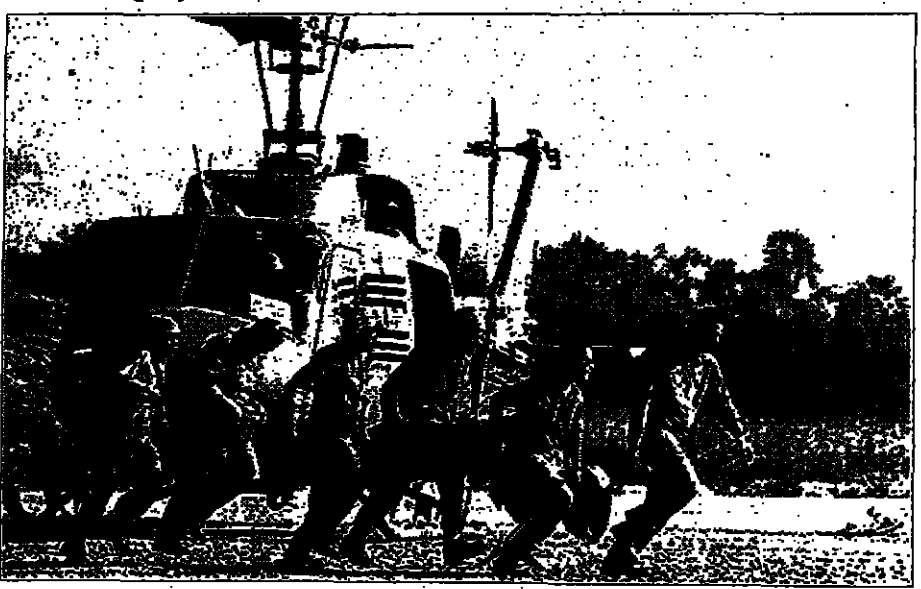
But opponents argue that a unilateral withdrawal would only encourage such attacks. They say the troops must stay until a peace treaty is signed.

"If we pull out, it is unavoidable that areas under Hizbollah or Syrian control would serve as a springboard for attacks on Israel," said Ephraim Sneh, a Labor Party lawmaker and onetime commander of Israeli forces in Lebanon. "We have no choice but to stay."

Public opinion surveys, however, indicate that support is growing for a withdrawal, reflecting a weariness among Israelis over the continuing toll in Lebanon. Most polls show that a majority now support a pullout. Amid growing calls for a withdrawal, the Netanyahu government gave conditional approval this spring to a 20-year-old UN Security Council resolution calling on Israel to pull out of Lebanon. The Lebanese government quickly rejected the condition, which involved cooperating with Israel in establishing "appropriate security conditions."

Arik Ben-Zvi, 23, joined Four Mothers after completing his army service, some of which was spent in southern Lebanon. "I lived through Lebanon for almost a year and had friends killed and injured there," said Ben-Zvi, now a student at Tel Aviv University. "I tried to think of it as a mission, to stay alive and take care of the soldiers under my charge. But when I got out, I got frustrated and angry. It's a failed policy," he said. "We're in a static position in Lebanon, fighting a guerrilla enemy who knows the terrain better than we do. So one day we kill one of their commanders and we score a point; the next day, they kill a couple of our soldiers and they score a point. But there's no question of progress; there's no way of winning this war."

LA Times-Washington Post News Service



Suha Bishara flicks the "V" sign

AMMAN (Star)—Freed at last. The release of Suha Bishara from Al Khayam prison in the Israeli-controlled security zone in southern Lebanon, is being described as a moral victory against Israeli occupation.

Her release last week after 10 years in prison came after long and tense negotiations as well as international pressure exerted on Israel and the South Lebanese Army. Observers say France played a direct role in securing her release. Amnesty International has long said Bishara is an illegally held "hostage."

Bishara was arrested on 7 November 1988 after she shot and wounded General Antoine Lahad, commander of the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army militias in occupied south Lebanon.

After her arrest she was transferred to Israel where she was interrogated and then sent back to the Khayam Detention Center in south Lebanon, according to her Israeli lawyer, Leah Tsemel.

During her imprisonment, she was held in solitary confinement for a lengthy period and has never been permitted visits by lawyers, the Red Cross or human rights activists. She has never been tried. After her arrest up till 1995, Bishara was denied any visitation rights.

Despite the Israeli authorities insistence that Israel has nothing to do with Bishara, her detention, or Khayam prison, it is well known that the real authority in South Lebanon is in fact Israel, including everything concerning detention in Khayam.

Attorney Leah Tsemel continued to petition on her behalf. She tried the Israeli courts but with no success. Tsemel, a lawyer who long campaigned on behalf of Palestinian prisoners in Israel, charged that the SLA is not an independent army, but operates under the Israel Defense Forces, making Al Khayam Israel's responsibility. She also maintained that Lahad follows Israeli orders.

But this is denied by Israel. A spokesman for the Israeli Defense Ministry said: "Al Khayam is a Lebanese prison facility, and we therefore do not normally reply to questions on the subject." The IDF spokesman said that questions about Al Khayam should be directed to the SLA command.

A member of the Communist Party, and one whose release has even been called for by Hizbollah, Suha Bishara remains unrepentant. After her release, the now 31-year-old, told reporters that she did not regret trying to kill Lahad.

"It was our duty to liberate our

land...from the start, I did not consider it a crime. I don't consider him [Lahad] a Lebanese. I considered him a Jew and continue to do so," she told a news conference.

Bishara is alleged to have befriended Lahad's wife to get close to the SLA commander to carry out the assassination attempt.

Reports from Lebanon said that thousands of people gathered in Beirut for the reception to mark her release that was apparently brokered through the auspices of France, as well as the International Committee of the Red Cross.

An international campaign for the release of Suha Bishara developed over the last two years, especially in France where prominent intellectuals and public figures submitted a petition to the Israeli Authorities demanding her immediate release. They also addressed (as did her lawyer Attorney Leah Tsemel) the French government to intervene for her release.

According to Israeli newspapers, President Chirac asked for her release during his last meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, but Netanyahu refused.

Several months ago there was also a committee formed in Israel supporting the release of Suha Bishara, adding a local voice to the interna-

tional pressure. Bishara said she would continue to help the struggle to liberate south Lebanon. Prime Minister Rafik Hariri said French President Jacques Chirac played a key role in securing Bishara's freedom.

But the SLA said she was ordered freed on "pure humanitarian reasons" by Lahad.

After she was driven to Beirut to meet the Lebanese President, Hariri simply told her, "You have raised Lebanon's head high."

Lebanese state-run TV linked Bishara's fate to France's reported granting of citizenship to Lahad and senior SLA officers when or if Israel withdraws its army from Lebanon.

Bishara shot Lahad in his house in Marjayoun, reportedly with a 5.5mm pistol. Lahad, 67, survived with serious injuries and was treated in Israel.

In March 1998 a petition was submitted by Suha Bishara's lawyer to the Israeli Supreme Court of Justice. After several delays and postponement, the Supreme Court was to deliberate on her case in two weeks.

The liberation of Suha Bishara is a modest victory in the on-going international campaign to release all of the administrative detainees in Israel as well as in South Lebanon.

By Pamela Constable

PESHAWAR, Pakistan—The Afghan woman's face was framed by a soft green veil. Around her neck hung an amulet inscribed with the name Allah. But just one week before, the 31-year-old Muslim radio producer had fled an increasingly unbearable life in Kabul, Afghanistan's capital, under the harsh Islamic movement known as the Taliban. Her green eyes flashed angrily as she described what she and other Afghan women are forced to endure.

"With this chador they make us put on, we can't even see well enough to walk," she said, referring to the head-to-toe covering all women must wear outdoors. "They make us report to work but only to sign in, so they can tell the world that women are working. Then we are sent home again to do nothing. All my education, all my training, for nothing. It makes our mothers very sad for us."

Hundreds of thousands of Afghan refugees have fled to this vast, dusty border city since the 1979 Soviet invasion of the country, making it more Afghan than Pakistani. The refugee camps have long since become towns teeming with open-air meat markets, wedding dinsel, barbecue restaurants, donkey carts and motorbike-driven "rickshaws." The lingua franca is not Pakistani Urdu but Afghanistan's Pashtun.

And everybody has an opinion about the Taliban. The group, which seized Kabul in September 1996 and now controls almost all of Afghanistan, has long been criticized by human rights groups and foreign governments for the strictures it has imposed on Afghans as part of its interpretation of Islam.

At the same time, and with far less public attention, the Taliban has been consolidating its grip on power, beating back armed opposition groups in the north in a series of bloody battles.

Ever since beginning its armed campaign to wrest control of Afghanistan, the

The two faces of the Taliban

Taliban has been promising that after it had the once-chaotic and lawless country in its grip, it would ease its severe restrictions, many of them focused on women. So the radio producer and her friends hung on, hoping the mullahs who head the movement would keep their word. Instead, said the woman, who asked that her name not be published, the crackdown has intensified.

"The mullahs announced the other day that women can only leave home to shop on two days a week. They announced that no babies can be given foreign names," she said. "But the worst is the Amar-bil-Muroof (the moral police). They used to ride around in trucks, but now they have their own ministry. They board buses and inspect the women, and if one doesn't have the proper dress, they beat her and all the others, too, with sticks or whips."

Had this ever happened to her? The woman looked sad, then embarrassed. Her hand crept down to her ankle, and she pulled up her flowing pajamas to reveal several scars.

"I came out on my doorstep one morning, and there they were. I didn't even have time to step into the street," she said, her eyes angry again. "They yelled that my trousers weren't long enough, and they started beating my feet and legs. There was nothing I could do." Laying the pajamas fall around her ankles again, she adjusted the veil tighter around her face.

In a shady stone courtyard less than a mile away, a 31-year-old Pakistani man was preparing for evening prayers. His view of the Taliban was starkly different for a simple reason. He is one of them. Soft-spoken, with a tightly wrapped white turban on his head, he offered an American



Afghani women walk the streets

reporter tea and cookies. Then he asked a group of boys to recite some verses from the Koran. Within three years, he said proudly, the students in this madrasa, or religious school, will have learned all 6,666 sacred verses by heart.

Qazi Shabbir Ahmad Azhari is a teacher of talibs, or seekers. Some of his early graduates have become officials of the Taliban. Thirty more left just last week, to help Taliban fighters quash pockets of resistance in the north. Those who remain behind, mostly adolescents, long to join them.

"It is my daily prayer that one day I will be in Afghanistan so I can become one of those killed in the way of Allah," said a slender boy summoned from the courtyard steps, where he had been hopefully

inspecting his hairless chin in a small mirror. The teacher nodded his approval.

Over more tea, Azhari explained his mission: to unify the region's conservative Muslim groups, being Pakistan under Islamic law like Afghanistan and ultimately "Islamize" the world. The Taliban has made a good start, he said, adding that it is "necessary for them to use force against those unwilling to obey Islam, because Afghanistan was losing its Islamic and moral values."

Why must men wear beards? "Because that is the way of the prophet," he said. Why must women be veiled? "So men will not be attracted to them, which is destructive of society." Why must music be banned? "Because all music talks about is love. It is better to pray."

America and the West, he said, are the "true terrorists," backing Israel against Palestinians, Bosnia against Muslims, India against Kashmiris. The recent US attack against Osama bin Laden, the Saudi expatriate fugitive and Islamic crusader blamed for the bombings of two American embassies in Africa, was "an attack against humanity" and against a hero who gave up the comforts of wealth to join a holy cause.

"We are only responding to this terrorism, but we will use weapons of war, and we are willing to sacrifice it all," the teacher asserted. "Allah teaches that if you really believe, nothing can harm you, not even the United States."

Half-kidding, he offered to trade bin Laden for Salman Rushdie. Then, passing the sugar, he said there was one final point he wished to make.

"Some Christians have been coming here to convert people from Islam. You call them missionaries."

Tell the United States that if it doesn't stop, we will start a campaign against Americans, and whenever we find one, we will shoot him."

The muezzin began chanting the call to prayer, and Azhari excused himself. In the mosques of Peshawar and in the muddy, bazaar alleys of Hayatabad, a sprawling suburb that is the heart of the Afghan community, there are many others who view the Taliban as a force for liberation and pacification.

Moreover, it is clear that the American missile attacks, while aimed at bin Laden's operations, have aroused both nationalistic and Muslim fervor among Afghans living here—even those who have not been back to their homeland in two decades.

"I hear the law-and-order situation is

getting better every day. If the Taliban really took control, I would definitely go back," said Rehman Uddin, 40, who was once a prosperous farmer in Jalalabad, Afghanistan, but now sells pears from a tiny market stall, earning about 40 rupees (under \$1) a day. A knot of men around him in the sweltering market nodded and murmured in agreement.

"We all miss the soul of our land," he said. "If there were water and electricity and roads again, you couldn't pay me \$2,000 to stay in Pakistan."

That afternoon the mood in Peshawar's downtown mosque was militant. Religious leaders from the Jamaat al-Islami movement turned the Friday noonday prayer meeting into a strident anti-American harangue, and several thousand worshippers followed them through the streets for an hour afterward, chanting, "Taliban is great! Taliban is great!" When they reached the Qissa Khawani bazaar, several elderly mullahs climbed onto a balcony and began shouting hoarsely.

There were no women in the crowd, and no women in the street. Every few minutes, one of the demonstrators looked up and glared at a veiled reporter watching from a balcony. For the radio producer, such experiences are part of everyday life. The Taliban's severe curtailment of women's activities, she said, is a "tragedy" not only for Afghan women, but for the entire society. She pointed out that after two decades of conflict and death, 60 percent of Kabul's populace is female, and so are a majority of those with education and skills that are badly needed in a country whose infrastructure was bombed to bits and whose professional class fled in droves after the 1979 Soviet invasion.

"I wanted to help my country, and I had a lot to offer. But now they say they don't need women," she said bitterly. "There is no future for us at all."

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

Chemical dumps expose Russia to big health risks

By David Hoffman

LEONIDOVKA, Russia—In a verdant pine forest here, sprinkled with birch trees, the lush growth suddenly disappears. Underbrush gives way to a black ulcer on the earth. In the clearing nothing grows, not even grass.

Vladimir Pankratov, a gray-haired former Soviet military man who is now an environmentalist, kicked at the ground on the edge of the dark clearing in the woods. He kicked again and again. He poked a stick into the soil—and pried up the nose cone of an aerial bomb.

This hole in the middle of a Russian forest is an uncharted chemical weapons graveyard. Buried here are vintage World War II aerial bombs, filled with a mixture of deadly lewisite, a blistering poison gas, and yperite, a sulfur mustard gas.

These abandoned bombs are a visible symbol of Russia's chemical weapons nightmare. It has more chemical bombs than any country, and it cannot get rid of them, or even find them all. Forty thousand tons of chemical weapons are stored in officially declared military depots. But thousands of other bombs lie in abandoned and uncharted weapons dumps, like this one. The Russian military, which created these uncharted dumps decades ago, still denies they exist.

Entombed in the forest here by Soviet soldiers in the early 1960s and then forgotten, the bombs are coming back to haunt the environment of today's Russia. Preliminary tests by a team of experts working with Pankratov have found heavy concentrations of arsenic in the soil. Lewisite is 36 percent arsenic. The black, sandy scars on the forest floor give off a powerful metallic odor.

Moreover, the poison is spreading in an area where hundreds of thousands of people live. Water and soil tests by Pankratov's team showed that arsenic is turning up in higher concentrations than normal 2-1/2 miles away in bottom sediments of tributaries to the Sursk Reservoir. The reservoir provides drinking water to Penza, the nearby provincial capital, with a population of 530,000. Penza, 350 miles southeast of Moscow, is located in the rich black-earth farming belt of southern Russia, part of the Volga River basin, which itself was home to much of the Soviet chemical warfare industry.

Arsenic is extremely toxic. In acute poisoning, violent stomach and intestinal inflammation and bleeding lead to massive losses of fluid and bodily salts, causing collapse, shock and death. Long-term low-level exposure can lead to other ailments, including cancer.

Not on any map, protected only by one

distant sign warning people to keep out, the chemical weapons graveyard is a small glimpse of what is becoming a painful torment for Russia—the legacy of chemical and nuclear weapons production during the Cold War.

Across Russia's vast steppes and Siberian taiga, and into the seas from the Baltic to the Pacific, the Soviet Union and later Russia have dumped, buried, spilled and exploded chemical and nuclear substances that had only one purpose—to kill people. They were the ingredients or byproducts of weapons of mass destruction. They were the wastes of the Cold War. Now, they continue to damage the land and people.

Although the Soviet Union has collapsed, a full accounting of the contamination it loosed on the environment has never been made. For most of the Cold

are talking about a dangerous contamination of the soil.

The contamination may become an enormous economic burden to a country already flat on its back. Russia simply cannot afford to clean up the poisons left behind by 50 years of dumping and discharge by the military and its bomb-making industry. The pollution is a potential health time bomb, causing an increased incidence of cancer and disease for which no one wants to take responsibility, especially the beleaguered Russian military.

After an initial surge of citizen activism at the end of the Soviet period, Russians today are more focused on economic survival, sometimes desperately.

"People are indifferent," said Vladimir Verzhbovsky, a journalist in Penza, not far from the chemical weapons dump. "Those who try and arouse public opinion are

treated as clowns and not taken seriously. Life is so hard. Salaries haven't been paid, in some cases for years. And people think, how are they going to feed the children? People are aware they are living on a powder keg. But their current interests are different."

Leonidovka is near one of the uncharted chemical weapons dumps, hidden in the nearby forest. The village also sits next to a military base that is an official depot for thousands of tons of the still-active chemical bombs.

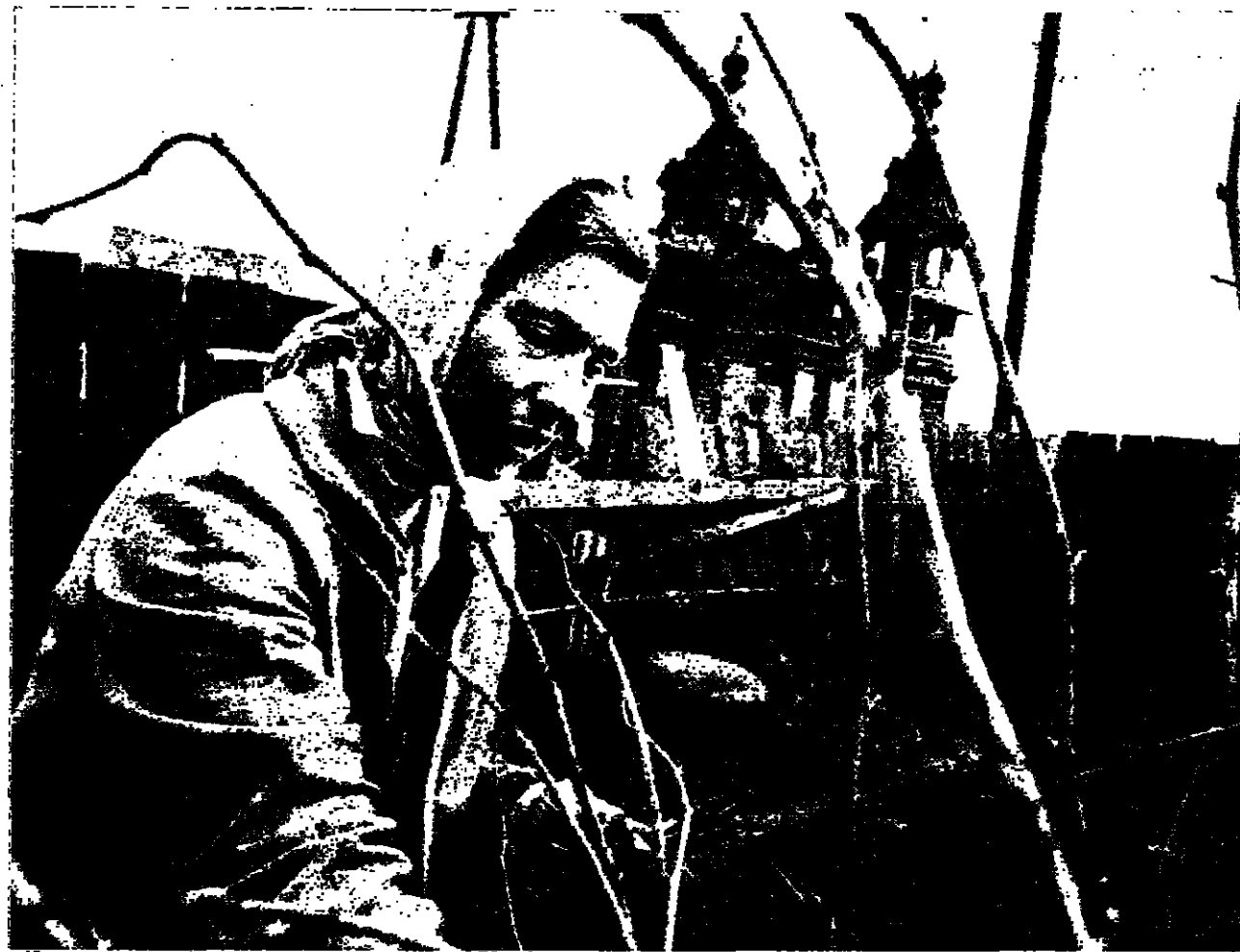
Russia has formally declared it holds about 40,000 tons of chemical weapons. The stockpile consists of 32,200 tons of nerve gases—sarin, soman and VX, and 7,700 tons of lewisite, mustard gas and their mixtures. They are stored in seven depots, including Leonidovka.

Behind the arsenal's high walls here are 15 million pounds of VX, sarin and soman gases packed into aviation bombs. These are known as nerve agents because they attack the nervous system after

inhalation or contact with the skin. They can kill within minutes at very low doses. The agent sarin was used in the Aum Supreme Truth cult's 1995 terrorist attack on the Tokyo subway system, which killed 12 people and injured 5,500. At Leonidovka alone, there is more than enough nerve gas, if distributed by individual doses, to wipe out every human on Earth.

Almost all of the villagers have worked in the arsenal. Maria Zavyalova, 72, recalled that in the 1950s she tended bombs there. "We were given gas masks," she said. "It was hot in the summer. We were told not to gather mushrooms and berries in the woods, that it was all poison."

Eventually, the bombs may be destroyed at a new facility here, but there are no plans for cleaning up the abandoned dump.



A villager prunes her raspberry plants in Bolshoi Balchug, Russia, just downstream from a plutonium plant. Experts have found a disturbing pattern of illnesses in the area.

Residents are uneasy. "People feel concerned, there is no denying it," said Irina Molchanova, 33, a deputy school principal. She asked a visitor, "Do you think we are living on a powder keg?"

Russia signed the Chemical Weapons Convention in 1993 and ratified it in 1996. The treaty, which took effect last year, calls for abolishing the development, production, stockpiling and transfer of chemical weapons and outlawing their use. Most experts agree that Russia's aging stocks have outlived any military utility. Under the treaty, Russia and other nations agreed to destroy the weapons over 10 to 15 years. The United States already has begun destroying its stockpile of 32,000 tons of chemical weapons at two sites and is expected to finish by 2004.

But Russia's government is chronically short of cash, and the military establishment is collapsing for lack of money. Gen. Stanislav Petrov, commander of Russia's radiation, chemical and biological defense troops, said in an interview that Russia needs \$5.5 billion to liquidate the chemical weapons. But in the last two years, he said, the government delivered only 2 or 3 percent of what was budgeted for the program, which is falling behind schedule.

"I cannot express a lot of enthusiasm here on how the state is financing this program," he said.

The United States has provided as much as \$194 million to help Russia launch the technology and design for a nerve agent disposal facility in southern Siberia, and Germany and the Netherlands are making contributions, but the totals are just a fraction of what Russia will need.

"There is no way Russia can fulfill the convention," said Sergei Baranovsky, executive director of Green Cross Russia, an environmental group that has worked closely with the government. "Russia is left alone. It needs the help of the West."

The Soviet military had commissioned a plant in the city of Chayapysk, in the Volga region, for destroying chemical weapons, but protests from citizens sty-

mied the project before it went into full-scale operation. As a result, President Boris Yeltsin decided in 1992 that the chemical weapons should be destroyed in the seven cities where they are now stored.

Although publicly declaring the size of the stockpile, Russia and the Soviet Union have never accounted for bombs that were secretly dumped and destroyed in earlier years, many of which are decaying in unmarked graveyards like the one in the woods outside Leonidovka.

Lev Fedorov, an activist who is president of the Union of Chemical Safety, a citizens' network, has estimated that the Soviet authorities dumped half a million tons of chemical weapons in three periods between the end of World War II and the late 1980s.

Many were sunk at sea in 12 locations in the Baltic Sea, the Kara Sea and the Sea of Japan. They included Soviet-made weapons and those captured from Nazi Germany. Tens of thousands of tons also were buried in unmarked and still undisclosed graveyards around the Soviet Union, according to Fedorov.

Fedorov said the final wave of dumping and burying came in the late 1980s as the Soviet Union tried to reduce the size of its huge arsenal to something approximating the US stockpile. The Chemical Weapons Convention only partially covers abandoned chemical weapons, those discarded after the mid-1970s.

"It's no secret that chemical weapons were destroyed at all arsenals by methods that they knew at that time, and these toxic substances have spread," said Pankratov, who once worked in the Soviet military's chemical weapons troops and later helped with the cleanup of the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear power plant accident. Now, he is the volunteer head of the Penza chapter of Green Cross. Pankratov is overseeing experts who have taken soil samples at the abandoned dump as part of a Green Cross project. "The results are dismaying," he said.

"On the place where the weapons were

destroyed, there are excessive amounts of arsenic. The tests found high concentrations of arsenic buried from six feet to 16 feet deep," he said.

The average concentration of arsenic was 30 grams per kilogram of soil, or 15,000 times greater than the permissible concentration of 2 milligrams per kilo by Russian standards, according to a report Pankratov has written for Green Cross. The original lewisite has dissipated, but studies have shown that arsenic compounds can remain in the soil for dozens of years.

Even more worrisome is the proximity of the dump to the Sursk Reservoir. Tests on the bottom sediments of tributaries to the reservoir have found the arsenic concentration is 20 milligrams per kilo, or about 10 times the permissible level, Pankratov said. So far, the findings have not been made public. No research has been done on the possible health effects.

Pankratov said no one will even admit to being responsible for the dump. Petrov, the general in charge of chemical weapons, said that a search of military archives found "insufficient information" to locate such dumps. He also said they are "not our priority target." He added, "I think this problem does not exist for us. The burials in the ground were nothing at all on Russian territory."

Pressed about the site at Leonidovka, Petrov said perhaps the weapons were left by retreating German troops in World War II. But German troops never advanced as far as Leonidovka during the war. The Petrov said perhaps the location was a bog. He said the military might send specialists to look at the site.

"We haven't found anything in the archives about Leonidovka, nothing at all," he said. "Our arsenal is there. We own this arsenal, and we know what is kept where."

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

Airbus win regional jets deal in biggest order yet

BRITISH AIRWAYS will announce it is to acquire up to 230 new aircraft, including up to 188 Airbus regional jets, during a visit to Airbus' Toulouse base.

Seventy-five of the new aircrafts will be delivered as firm orders with options on the rest. This represents the largest number of aircraft ever chosen by British Airways in a single deal and the largest single commitment yet made to the European consortium by any airline outside the USA.

All the new aircraft are quieter than the models they will replace and offers customers the best in comfort and flexibility.

Firm orders have been placed for 59 Airbus aircraft in the A320 family, with options reserved on up to another 129. The first 21 of the firm orders will be used by British Airways Regional on its routes from Birmingham and Manchester. The remaining firm orders and options are for use on British Airways UK domestic and European services from Gatwick, and by French and German subsidiaries Air Liberté and Deutsche BA. The aircraft will be fitted with V2500 engines made by International Aero Engines, in which Rolls-Royce has a 32.5% stake.

The announcement reaffirms the airline's commitment to its British Airways Regional operations, which employ 1,000 people, mainly in Birmingham and Manchester. It also protects the jobs of a further

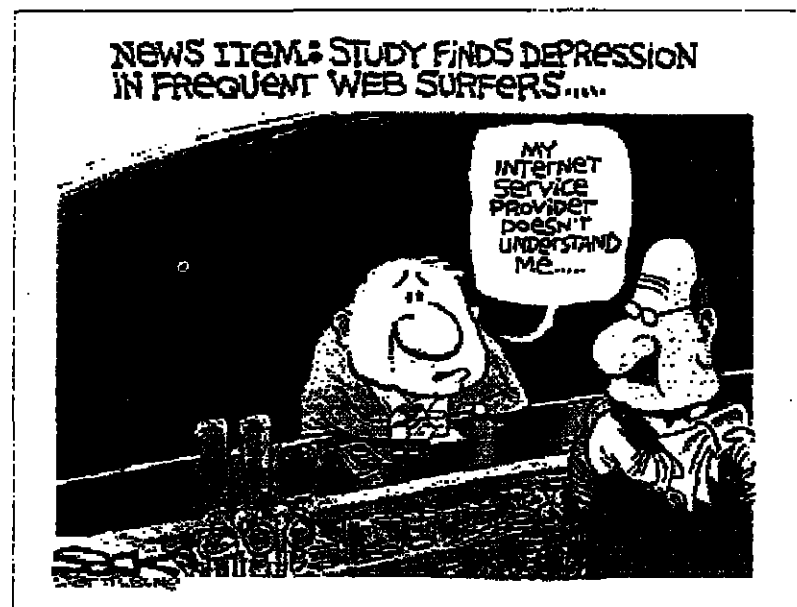
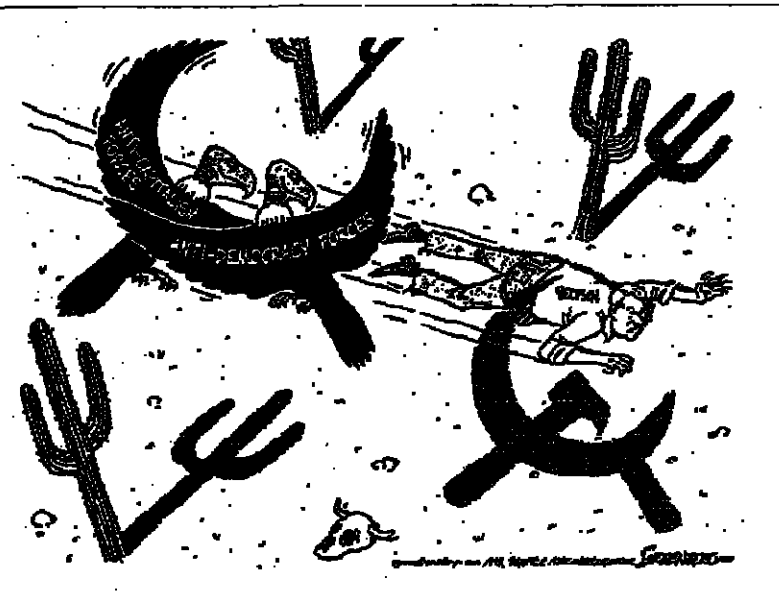
38,000 people employed by some 300 companies working directly on Airbus activities in the UK alone, or for Rolls-Royce, where a large number of the IAE engines will be built.

British Airways also announced an order for another 16 Boeing 777s with options on up to a further 16. Most of these will be the new extended range version of the aircraft, capable of flying up to 256 passengers and more than 16 tons of cargo non-stop on all but ultra-long-range routes. They will require different engines from the 777s currently in service with the airline. General Electric, Pratt & Whitney and Rolls-Royce have been invited to tender for their supply. Negotiations are underway.

Some of these new 777 orders substitute for existing orders for five 401-seat Boeing 747-400s. The first six of these 777s will be delivered in early 2000. The remaining 10 firm orders will follow, with the last delivered in 2002.

The "list price" of the 75 firm orders is £3 billion. This does not reflect discounts British Airways has negotiated or the expected proceeds of disposals of aircraft the newcomers will replace or the benefit of substituting some existing orders. The net cost to British Airways of the short-haul and long-haul firm orders, including orders for three 777s announced in April, is around £1.4 billion.

Cartoon Corner



The Star
Jordan's political, economic
and cultural weekly
OnLine

<http://star.arabia.com>



Working out in Zerqa

By Lubna Khader
Star Staff Writer

ZERQA—The health craze has hit Jordan by storm. More and more people, especially women, are

aware of the need to work out. Health clubs have begun to appear all over the country, and are being frequented by all types—young and old, thin and fat.

Zerqa is no exception to

this recent craze. There is now, for example, at least two health centers for every neighborhood, something unheard of a few years ago. The fact that women are becoming more health con-

scious is very interesting. Health centers are playing the role of the community hall. Women meet and catch up on the local gossip whilst exercising at the same time. The number of women turning up to health centers rose dramatically during the summer holidays, as house chores became less demanding.

Miss Hazzar Fouad, the coach at a health center in Zerqa, confirmed this trend. "We see a massive increase in customers during the holidays, but I think there are other factors at play as well. The weather during the summer months inspires people to leave their houses. The opposite is also true; when it is raining and cold, we see only the very determined or health conscience."

The locality of health centers makes it very easy for everyone to meet up. Located in the heart of the community, they are often a short walking distance.

The cost of exercising has helped fuel this trend as well. Prices tend to be relatively cheap, and are affordable by the majority of households.

In Zerqa, they average around JD 15 per month, but there are places where you can exercise for less. This contrasts sharply to the prices set in Amman, which can reach as high as JD 60 a month (naturally, some centers have more equipment than others, and of varying quality).

In addition to price, location, and the 'communal spirit,' the main reason why people are turning up to health centers is to lose weight, and to get fit. Today, everyone is aware of the benefits of exercising—massive media campaigns by health authorities have shown how exercising can help the body fight illness and disease, especially for women.

Miss Dalal Al Jallad, at the White Flower Center, pointed out that her center only receives women between the ages of 14 and 60. "The exercises depend on the particular age group, but our coaches are on hand to set the program that best suits your needs."

One fitness trainer told *The Star* that, "a lot of women who come to our gym want to lose weight quickly. They need to understand that this process can take time. We advise all our customers to go on a diet, before, during and after training."

"Diet is essential; both the quantity and quality of your food is important."

In order to succeed, therefore, you need to persevere with the set regime for several months at least. The first step is to get yourself into the gym. Once you are there, it is up to you how much exercise you do. Mind you, if you do feel tired, you can always chat with your neighbor!

Weight-wise

Indoor cycling

By Susan Duff

If you're looking for a new kind of aerobic workout that offers intense calorie burn and great leg muscle development, check out indoor cycling or spin classes at your local fitness center. Why would any one want to pay money to get on a stationary bike indoors when you can bicycle around in the beautiful outdoors for free? Efficiency is the reason. The 40 minutes you spend in a typical spin class can burn up to 700 calories and give your heart a top-notch workout. (Cycling around on your own can't give you this kind of intensity unless you're training for an Iron Man triathlon.) This is an activity for dieters who have minimal time and want maximum results.

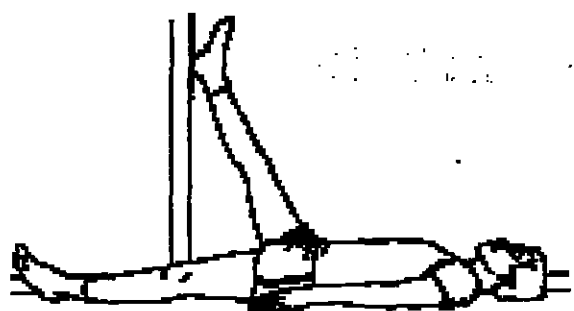
What an indoor cycling or spin class involves is a group of "spinners" on stationary bikes led by an instructor through a series of cycling speeds and pedal tension adjustments. After an easy low-tension pedaling

warm-up, you'll be pedaling at a high resistance, adjusting the tension of the pedals. Most classes involve intervals of high resistance, followed by periods of low resistance, and then a final high resistance period. Your heart rate steadily rises throughout the class and stays elevated during the cool-down period.



Always wear your seat belt. The lowest tension is used for the control of the bike. The instructor will use the tension to guide you through your exercises. You can adjust the tension of the pedals at any time by turning the tension knob. The setting is because there are no adjustments on the adjuster.

10 ways to stay healthy



1- Immunize: Immunizations are the best bargain in health care. When you immunize, you prevent illness for your family and help prevent epidemics in your community.

2- Keep moving: Any way you define it, fitness is essential to good health. Even moderate exercise makes a huge difference both in how you feel and what illnesses you get.

3- Eat right: Eating a well-balanced, low-fat diet of wholesome foods will keep you energetic and free of many illnesses. Consider breast-feeding your baby to help keep him or her in the best health.

4- Control stress: Even with a hectic and hurried lifestyle, you can prevent stress from undermining your health.

5- Be smoke-free: Smokers who quit gain tremendous health benefits. So do people who avoid secondhand smoke.

6- Avoid drugs and excess alcohol: When you say "no" to drugs and limit what you drink, you prevent accidents and illnesses and avoid a lot of problems for yourself and your family.

7- Put safety first: Safety at home, at work, and at play; safe driving; and firearm safety all help keep you healthy.

8- Pursue healthy pleasures: Take naps, relax during meals, play with kids, care for a pet—they all can add to your health.

9- Think well of yourself: A good self-image is the foundation of good health.

10- Promote peace: Peace on earth begins at home. Seek nonviolent ways of resolving conflicts at home, at school, at work, and in your community.

Your personal fitness plan

Benefits of exercise

- ◆ Relieves tension and stress.
- ◆ Provides enjoyment and fun.
- ◆ Stimulates the mind.
- ◆ Helps maintain stable weight.
- ◆ Controls appetite.
- ◆ Boosts self-image.
- ◆ Improves muscle tone and strength.
- ◆ Improves flexibility.
- ◆ Lowers blood pressure.
- ◆ Relieves insomnia.
- ◆ Increases "good" (HDL) cholesterol.
- ◆ Reduces risk of diabetes.

Fitness and relaxation
Staying fit and relaxed is not only good for your health, it is good for you. If you want to enjoy life more, the tips below can help.

No amount of exercise can guarantee a long life. However, even moderate amounts of exercise can improve the likelihood of a healthy life. Along with a positive attitude and a healthy diet, your fitness level plays a major role in how well you feel, what illnesses you avoid, and how much you enjoy life.

Consider the benefits of fitness presented here and find one or more reasons to commit to your own fitness program.

Your personal fitness plan
No one can prescribe the perfect fitness plan for you. You have to figure it out based on what you enjoy doing and what you will continue to do.

Consistency is the most important, the most basic, and the most often neglected part of fitness. Consistency in regular exercise or moderate activity delivers all of the fitness benefits.

A good fitness plan has three parts: aerobic fitness, muscle strengthening, and flexibility.

Aerobic Fitness
Aerobic conditioning strengthens your heart and lungs. Good aerobic exercises include brisk walking, running, stair climbing, biking, swimming, aerobic dance, or anything else that raises your heart rate and keeps it up for a while.

How hard should I Exercise?

Nice and easy does it. Exercise does not have to be intense to be of value. In fact, if you exercise too hard, you get less benefit than if you go at a moderate pace.

Above all, listen to your body. If the exercise feels too hard, slow down. You will reduce your risk of injury and enjoy the exercise much more.

Try the "talk-sing test" to determine your ideal exercise pace:

- If you can't talk and exercise at the same time, you are going too fast.
- If you can talk while you exercise, you are doing fine.
- If you can sing while you exercise, it would be safe to

exercise a little faster.

Your exercise is most effective when you can talk, but not sing, while doing it.

Target heart rate
Another way to see how hard you are exercising is to check your heart rate. You gain the most aerobic benefits when your exercise heart rate is 60 percent to 80 percent of your maximum heart rate. After exercising for about 10 minutes, stop and take your pulse for 10 seconds. Compare the number to the chart at right.

Adjust the intensity of your exercise so that your heart rate stays between the two numbers. However, the target heart rate is only a guide. Each individual is different, so pay attention to how you feel.

Target heart rate

Age	10-second heart rate
20	20-27
25	20-26
30	9-25
35	19-25
40	18-24
45	18-23
50	17-23
55	17-23
60	16-22
65	16-21
70	15-20

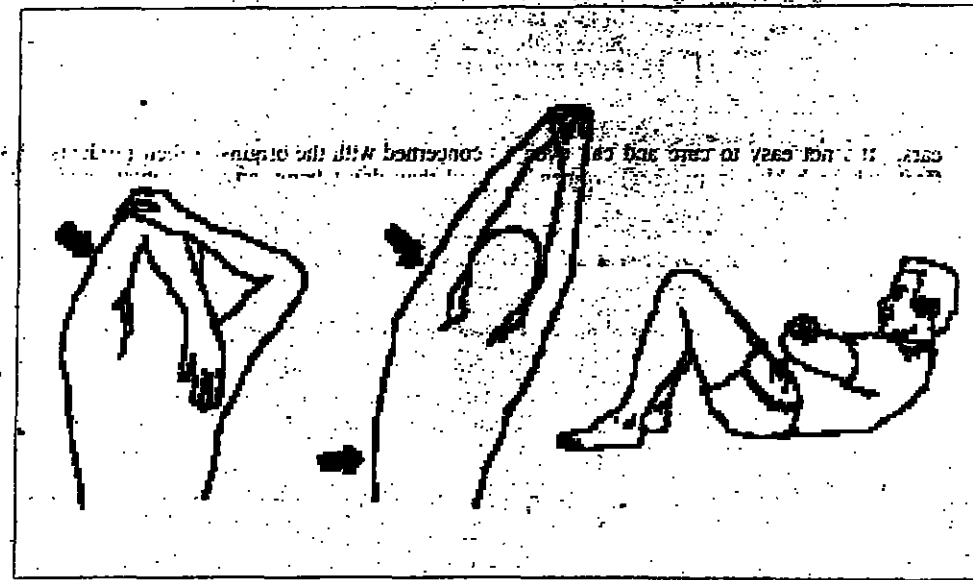
Target heart rate is 60 percent to 80 percent of maximum heart rate (maximum heart rate = 220 minus your age).

Beyond that, there may be diminishing health returns and increasing risk of injuries.

Warm up and cool down
For the first five minutes of your exercise routine, start out slowly and easily so your muscles have a chance to warm up.

End your exercise with a little cool-down period. Gradually slow your pace, then do a few light stretches to improve flexibility.

Drink some extra water before and after exercising.



Muscle strengthening

Strengthening your muscles improves your work and athletic performance and prevents fatigue. Muscle-strengthening exercises will also improve your posture and help you feel more energetic.

Resistance training, with free weights, weight-training equipment, or inexpensive rubber tubing, can quickly increase your muscle strength.

Other simple, safe, and effective strengthening exercises include bent-knee curl-ups, chin-ups, push-ups, side leg-

lifts, and other calisthenics to improve abdominal, neck, arm, shoulder, and leg strength.

Flexibility
Stretching can increase your range of motion and reduce stiffness and pain. Stretching is particularly important during the cool-down phase when your muscles are warm.

Stretch slowly and gradually. Don't bounce. Maintain a continuous tension on the muscle.

Relax and hold each stretch for a count of 10. Exhale as you stretch, to further relax your muscles. If stretching hurts, you have gone too far or you are doing something incorrectly.

Try to stretch a little every day. Take a stretch break instead of a coffee break.

Hamstring stretch Hip flexor stretch

Setting your fitness goals

Are you as strong, flexible, and physically fit as you would like to be? If you are, good for you.

But if still you want to make some improvements, there's one piece of advice: Try to improve a little bit at a time.

○ The only way to walk a mile is to take one step at a time. The only way to improve your fitness level is to take it one step at a time.

○ Pick one aspect of fitness (aerobic, strength, flexibility) you want to improve first.

○ Pick an activity that you enjoy. You're more likely to keep doing something you like.

○ Set a one-month goal that you think you can reach. For example, plan to walk for 10 minutes at lunch three days a week, or stretch for five minutes each morning.

○ Start today. Keep a record of what you do.

○ When you reach your first goal, reward yourself! Then set a new one.

○ Consistency brings success. Each success may be a small one, but small successes can quickly add up to physical fitness that will make a big difference in your life.



Healthy Living

Everyday exercise



Curse 10
continue
Brazilian

60 perc

Curse of mercury continues to haunt Brazilian gold-diggers

By Beauty Lupiya and Jens Kristensen

POCONE, BRAZIL—Armed with bows, arrows and spears nearly 100 Indians from the Brazilian tribe of Kayapo recently captured and held hostage a gold prospector for invading and destroying their forests in the northern state of Para.

This action formed part of a protest staged by furious Indians demanding that an estimated 7,000 illegal prospectors, who have settled over half their land for more than 20 years and denuded their once flourishing forests, should leave.

"The situation is very serious. The Indians are threatening to attack the gold prospectors but the prospectors are armed, and they might not hesitate to shoot," Roberto Lustosa of FUNAI, the government body in charge of Indian affairs, told Panos Features.

This has happened before. In 1993, Brazilian prospectors invaded an area on the border between Venezuela and Brazil, killing 17 Indians who tried to protect their land.

According to a FUNAI spokesman working in Para, land is not the only issue. "The Indians also suffer from mercury poisoning, frequent malaria attacks and their rivers are polluted," Pityaro Menckera said.

Illegal prospectors in Brazil have used mercury to pan off gold for at least 15 years. According to surveys by the Environment Ministry, there are around 1,000 mercury-polluted gold mines throughout the country. They are also found in the neighboring countries of Venezuela, Bolivia and French Guyana.

Gold diggers draw off a mixture of mud, water and tiny gold particles from the bottom of man-made lakes and use mercury to separate the gold. Mercury-polluted water from these lakes then overflows into streams and spreads throughout a large network of tributaries and rivers causing widespread environmental damage and physical ailments.

Indians and prospectors—both dependent on rivers for fish—are at risk from mercury poisoning.

Brazilian scientists announced the first cases of mercury poisoning in 1994. Tests revealed that fishermen living on the banks of river Tupajos, a tributary of the Amazon river, had concentrations of mercury in their bodies and hair of as much as 151 particles per million (ppm)—far above the World Health Organization danger limit of 6 ppm.

Visual impairment, loss of hair, severe headaches, impotence and involuntary movements of arms, legs and muscles are all symptoms of mercury poisoning.

"Mercury poisoning goes on for many years. It's not easy to cure and can affect unborn babies in pregnant women," said Dr Fernando Branches, one of the Brazilian researchers.

But in many of these gold mining areas and mining towns, poverty is widespread and prospectors say they have no alternative means of income.

"Gold is our life. What do you want us to

do instead, steal?" said Jason da Silva, a 39-year-old prospector from the mining town of Pocone, in western Brazil. Jason, married with five children, earns 20 US dollars a week from panning for gold 16 hours a day.

On the other hand, the Indians are finding it more and more difficult to survive in a forest which is gradually being destroyed by the prospectors.

And a government ban on mercury, introduced in 1998, has proved difficult to enforce.

"It's not easy to protect the environment against prospectors. Most of them have no permanent address and have never been employed. They are constantly moving to new sites," said Eduardo Martins, director of the Brazilian Institute of Environment, IBAMA.

In Belem, the capital of Para, a spokesman for the government's Institute of Science, Technology and Environment, Luis Osorio Fernandes, said they have been educating people about the environment and dangers of mercury poisoning. The number of mercury-related illnesses has diminished by more than 50 percent in the last 10 years, he says.

But Conceicao pinheiro, a researcher from the Federal University of Para, warns that even if most people appear healthy, they will sooner or later fall seriously ill if contaminated with mercury.

"It is not easy to stop the use of mercury completely. There is currently no alternative for prospectors. They cannot afford to buy the expensive mining technology used by mining companies," said Fernandes.

Roberto Kishinami, president of Greenpeace Brazil, disagrees. Some gold prospectors have enough money to afford modern technologies, he says. They are simply too greedy to do so.

Greenpeace Brazil, a non-governmental organization that has been campaigning on this issue for several years, blames the government for not trying hard enough to improve the situation.

Greenpeace has found that half the mercury imported into Brazil goes to illegal prospectors and is calling for the government to introduce strict controls on imports. It is also pressing for licenses to be issued to all mercury users. If mercury users register their names with the government, they say, it will be easier to control the illegal circulation of mercury.

The only alternative is to boycott gold products," Roberto Kishinami said. "But it is not easy. Users of gold products are not concerned with the origins of their products and they don't know anything about environmental damage," he added.

But the government argues that, with the falling prices of gold both nationally and internationally, the number of prospectors is on the decline. And it is trying to encourage them to return to their previous way of life-farming.

To tattoo, or not to tattoo?

By Ibtisam Awadat
Star Staff Writer

THE ART of tattooing your skin with whatever design meets your fancy is on the increase in Jordan. Today, you can see designs on men everywhere—

young and old. Women are also beginning to take up to the craze. Some beauty saloons are even advertising the service.

"Most of the guys that I know of prefer to have a cobra on their arms," said Nawaf, a shop owner in downtown Amman and a well-informed guy when it comes to tattoos.

Unfortunately, the only professional tattooist has long since left Amman, so the job is being done by less experienced, but equally committed operators. "The whole process only takes half an hour," said Nawaf, who himself has had two permanent skin tattoos on his right arm—one of a hawk, while the other representing the first letter of his lover's name. "All you need is a car dynamo, a needle and some Chinese ink." Prices vary from JD 3 to 35, depending on the design and size of the tattoo.

Nawaf explained the mechanisms involved in making a tattoo. "At the beginning, you choose the design from various special tattoo magazines and catalogues, then you mark out the shape on your body with the needle. The needle is heated first on the fire, to prevent infection, and then applied to the skin. It works by leaving holes in your skin,



which are then filled with ink," Nawaf added.

But why should anyone want to torture themselves for half an hour, letting a burning needle pass through their skin? "I was going through a rebellious stage, but I really regret it now," said Nawaf, who faced a lot of criticism from everyone in his family. Things only got worse for Nawaf; his sons imitated their father, and are now the proud owners of tattoos.

For the moment, Nawaf has no means to remove the tattoo. "I tried using lemon juice and water. It worked to some extent, but the tattoo is still markedly visible," he lamented.

Meanwhile, Adel—a 25-year-old salesman—is totally obsessed with his tattoo. "I am not sorry for having a tattoo, as it is a sign of personal freedom," he said. Adel has an anchor on his left hand, and on his right hand he has a picture of a young woman. "Should that professional guy ever come back to Amman, I will get a huge tattoo on my back," he said, expectantly.

Nasser, Adel's brother, views his own tattoo differently. He had a surgical operation to remove it, but the results were not very successful. Instead of a tattoo, he now has a piece of burned skin.

For those who are beginning to regret having a tattoo, there is some hope. Dr Daoud Al Mohtaseb, a surgeon in Amman, advised that some tattoos could be removed by surgical

means, although the results depend on the size of the tattoo. "If the tattoo only covers a small area, we can cut the skin, then sew it back up again. You will be left with a scar though. If we are talking about a large surface area, then plastic surgery is the only means of escape," Dr Mohtaseb advised.



60 percent of world's coral reefs in danger

By Jim Lobe

WASHINGTON (IPS)—Human development is threatening the future of nearly 60 percent of the world's coral reef, according to a study released by the World Resources Institute (WRI).

Coastal development, overfishing and destructive fishing practices, and pollution resulting from both land and marine-based activities are doing the most to destroy the reefs, the study says.

The most threatened reefs are found in Southeast Asia, where an estimated 82 percent are considered to be at medium or high risk, and more than half of the reefs in the Middle East, the Caribbean, and the Indian Ocean face similar degree of threat.

"Like rainforests, reefs harbour much of the planet's wealth of species and are being rapidly degraded by humans," says the report's co-author, Dirk Bryant. "Yet we know far less about the health of reefs than we do of rainforests."

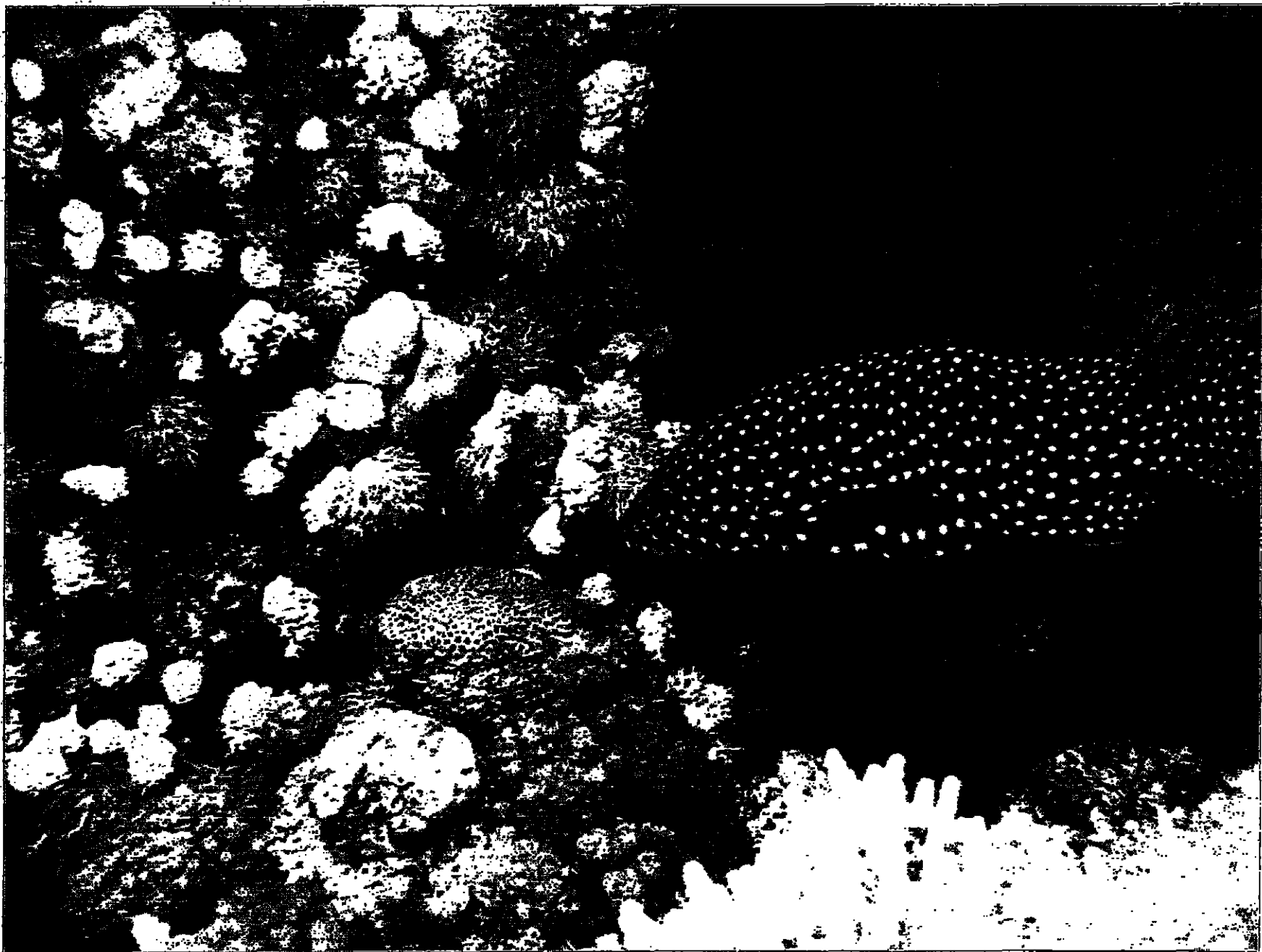
The 56-page report, *Reefs at Risk*, is a joint enterprise of WRI, the International Centre for Living Aquatic Resources Management (ICLARM) in Manila, the Britain-based World Conservation Monitoring Center (WCMC), and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in Nairobi.

Despite their vast age—some living coral reefs are 2.5 million-years-old—very little was known about the extent and condition of coral reefs until an initial survey of 108 countries was completed by the WCMC in 1988. The first global map depicting the location of shallow reefs around the world was published by WCMC only in 1996.

Reefs occupy less than one quarter of one percent of the earth's total marine environment, yet they are home to more than a quarter of all known marine fish species, according to the report.

Coral reefs are among the most valuable ecosystems on earth because of their immense biological wealth and the economic and environmental services they provide to millions of people. According to one estimate, reef habitats provide humans with living resources, such as fish, and services, such as tourism and protecting inhabited coasts from waves and storms, worth almost 400 billion dollars a year.

Concern about these habitats has grown as more has become known about them. A widely-cited 1993 report asserted that 10 percent of the world's reef were dead and that another 30 percent were likely to die within 20 years, but the new study says this was based on anecdotal evidence and scientific "guesswork." Even today,



The corals are under threat.

90 percent of the world's reefs remain to be comprehensively assessed for damage.

In the absence of that information, the new report, billed by its authors as the "first systematic and data-driven global assessment" of the reefs, is an attempt to combine what is known about the 800

degraded which have been studied, with maps and other data about the rest of the world's reefs to indicate the nature and extent of the major threats they face. As a result, the conclusions are a best estimate, rather than a catalogue, of actual damage. "The news is grim," says Bryant.

The report finds that 58 percent of the world's reefs are under high or medium threat from human activity and over-exploitation of fisheries, other reef resources and coastal development, represent about two-thirds of the threat. This estimate probably is conservative,

because it does not consider future threats, such as population growth or global warming caused by greenhouse gas emissions. The latter is believed by many scientists to contribute to warmer ocean temperatures and the increased frequency of storms, both of which put additional

stress on reefs, according to the report.

The study also finds that the coral reefs of Southeast Asia, which are the most species-rich on earth, are also the most threatened. In particular, the reefs of the Southern Islands in Singapore, the Bolinao Reef Complex in the Philippines, the Scarborough Reef in the South China Sea, and the Seribu Islands Reefs in the Java Sea near Jakarta are among the 12 most threatened throughout the world.

Other danger spots include the Florida Keys Reefs in the United States, the Bahia Las Minas Reefs near Panama, the Jamaica reef off Jamaica, the Red Sea Riviera along the Gulf of Aqaba in off Jordan, Israel and Egypt, and several reefs under US control in the central and western Pacific.

The reefs off Florida are at risk from the runoff of fertilizers and other pollutants from farms and coastal development. In Hawaii, the most serious threats are those related to rapid population growth and urbanisation, resulting in sewage discharges, dredging and construction, overuse, overfishing and industrial pollution.

Almost two-thirds of all Caribbean reefs are in jeopardy, according to the report. At highest risk are reefs Barbados, the US Virgin Islands and Jamaica—whose reefs have been ravaged by overfishing and pollution. "Many resemble graveyards, algae-covered and depleted of fish," the report says.

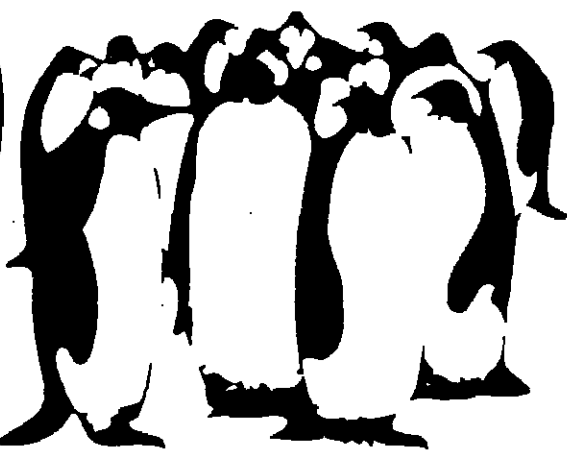
Such destruction, particularly that caused by coastal development and overfishing, is counterproductive to nearby human populations. The report notes the Caribbean's economic reliance on tourism, much of which depends on the health of the coral reefs. In addition, reefs and the fish they attract are a vital source of food for many of the world's poorest countries, especially those which ring the Indian Ocean.

Despite the trends, there is some hope for the reefs. Some countries and communities have devised ways to preserve the reefs without sacrificing economic development. These include the creation of marine parks and protected areas, of which, however, there are less than 400 worldwide, many no larger than one square kilometre in size.

The report stresses that tougher environmental laws and regulations are essential, and points out that more than 40 countries currently lack any protected areas for conserving their reef systems.

In some areas, however, governments, local organisations, and the private sector have worked effectively together to conserve reefs while compensating fishers and others whose activities damaged them.

AROUND TOWN



The Cyprus Airways way

Cyprus Airways held a reception for tour operators and travel agents in Irbid, this week. The idea is to increase cooperation between the operators and the airline. In the last two years, ticket sales on Cyprus Airways from Jordan has increased tremendously. Cyprus Airways has three-weekly flights from Amman to Larnaca.



'Solidarity', an exhibition about identity and loneliness

Lubna Khader
Star Staff Writer

NOSTALGIA, HOMESICKNESS, loneliness in foreign countries, preserving your identity for the sake of Arab-Islamic culture. These are themes in the "Solidarity" exhibition that is currently displayed at the National Gallery of Fine Arts in Al Weibdeh, under the patronage of HRH Princess Rahma Al Hassan.

This exhibition is both about the interdependence of eastern and western culture and about the ensuing integration of different faces.

The works are of two artists—Palestinian and Indian—who have personally experienced the traits of the emotions of fear and loneliness. It tells a great deal about the yearnings for their homelands. However, there is also an underlying feeling of the need for commonality and togetherness, to break the isolation of people that is naturally felt in distant lands.

In between these, and as an appendage to togetherness, Basheer Makhoul, a Palestinian painter, wants to share his background, ideas and feelings with the community in which he lives in—this being in Britain.

His wants to prove to the world that in spite of the hard conditions which Palestinians have to face in their daily lives, these can serve to give birth to great artists.

He says that through his works, he wants to explore the visual languages which both serve and incorporate cultural and political identities, and the continuing endless shifts of meaning around them. After finishing his doctorate from Manchester University, he continued with his paintings.

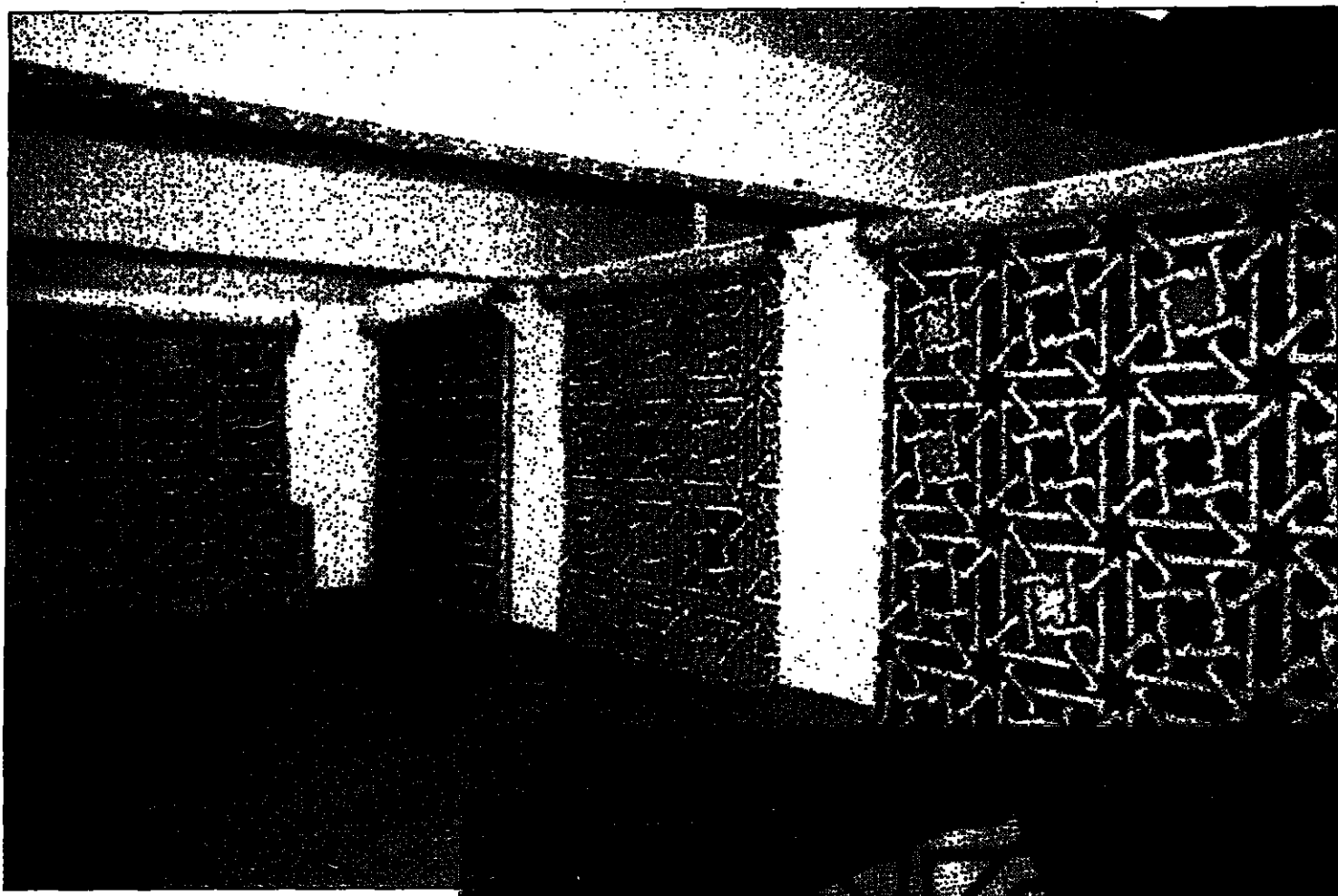
The first thing to attract the visitor's attention is a huge painting of bullets—lots and lots of bullets strung across the wall. The story has great depth and emotion. In one of his trips to Beirut, he saw a building riddled with bullets. He said the scene was awesome, and decided to depict it on canvas. But it can be clearly discerned that each bullet represents a victim—victims of the long and bloody Lebanese civil war.

Makhoul is deeply affected by his culture. Through his many exhibitions in the UK, he seeks to espouse Islamism as a culture, civilization, and artworks. But his espousal was made through geometry and shapes.

His Arabesque painting seek to do just this. In his current home, Manchester, Makhoul seeks to build networks between the local communities, and public bodies. Just like his art—attempting to build bridges between different civilizations—he seeks to entwine the two together.

In one of his paintings, he simply wrote in Arabic the word Jerusalem. This is to emphasize his bond with Jerusalem as an Arab-Islamic entity. He says language or particular words, take the place of specific colors, endlessly repeating themselves.

But Makhoul is a diverse artist, having a



particular interest in photography. In his exhibit, he has a whole section of photos. These express his anxiety for the lost homeland since the photographs display his inner emotional feelings of frustration and yearning. There is for example, a picture of the grandmother who he has never seen. His only contact with her was through letters and by the photos he has of her when she was young and old.

The second exhibition is by an Indian artist, Alnoor Mitha. He too lives in the UK, and speaks of loneliness. In his photographic works, Mitha takes endless snapshots of his daughter, randomly placed in jewelry boxes covered with colored and richly textured fabrics like silk, satin and velvet. These boxes have come to represent store houses of intimate family objects, whose roots span over three continents.

Both artists use natural colors without affectations, as their paintings are full of hope and optimism. The exhibition continues until 3 October.

SCRAPBOOK

Mother Diana and Princess Teresa!



By Rasheed Al Roussan
Special To The Star

PRINCESS DIANA'S memory was celebrated all over the world last week, and no doubt it will continue. After a year of her tragic death, roses and letters are still placed at the gates of her home. Hundreds of books have been written about her life. This is not to say anything about the memorabilia and the infinite number of photos that continue to be printed in the media. Her death has even turned the royal family into a "people's monarchy", where the royals are befriending everyone including the paparazzi. Last week for instance, Queen Elizabeth II was found mingling with workers at a McDonalds in London.

Newspapers' headlines, TV broadcasts and documentaries have never stopped talking about her charity work. Her family has recently opened the doors for a "Diana museum" held in their palace. Today, the Princess of Wales is becoming a saint of British society!

Ironically, her memory coincides with the anniversary of the death of a very special woman who devoted her life to humanity, Mother Teresa.

Unfortunately, the media concentrates on creating celebrities as they did with Princess Diana. In this high-tech showbiz world, Mother Teresa didn't have a chance. Helping the poor just isn't a high media profile.

When Prince Charles married the 20-year-old kindergarten teacher back in 1981, people were not concerned about her image as a person, but rather as the wife and mother of the next British monarch. Long after her divorce, and the start of her charity work, the press tirelessly focused on her divorce, and alleged love affairs. The media—mainly press and television—ignored her new life and concentrated on what outfit she wore, where she went, and whom she met.

On the other hand, the press almost dismissed the humanitarian work by Mother Teresa.

A film about Mother Teresa won't hit any box office like a Diana picture or a best seller will do! Still, the book of Mother Teresa's achievements is open to the world. It is a legacy of love, peace and charity. She isn't a movie star or a political reformer, she is an ordinary human being who helped others all the way back since her young days, till the moment she turned 88.

The media is heading towards the step of "reduplicating" stories of people like the Princess of Wales, to attract everyone. The object is to "recycle" stories time and again so that they would stick in the public's mind.

Credibility is not the issue here, what is at stake is sensational news, no matter how monotonous it becomes! Worldwide networks like CNN and NBC ferociously compete with each other to capture viewers around the globe by squeezing every story right to its very bones.

Even those who are not interested, became glued to their television sets. This is what happened to Princess Diana: In her life as well as in her death, she was treated as a true media saint. She is one of a number of media favorites, with OJ Simpson and President Clinton joining in the ballyhoo.

Unfortunately, the formula is practically working. The press turned people like OJ Simpson into heroes with tragic flaws.

For many citizens and institutes in England, Diana's death means more money than ever. There is a restaurant in England named after the deceased princess, the owner is anything but sad for her death.

Unluckily, Mother Teresa is among the unsung heroes of our century, where murder trials and sex scandals are making news headlines.

The flashes of cameras won't leave celebrities alone, while people like Mother Teresa choose to stay in the dark. No matter how the media holds on efforts to restrain such stories, the responsibility falls upon the readers and viewers to decide whether it is moral or not to continue the stream of constant media bombardment.

AGENDA

Exhibitions
■ Paintings by 18 artists from Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Palestine and Lebanon at the Al Mashriq Gallery, Shimsani. It continues until 1 November.

■ An art exhibition by Rula Shukairy at the French Cultural Center started on 1 September. The exhibit deals with the phenomenon of light as one of the most important issues of life. The event ends on 30 September.

■ Genevieve Hoffman made a survey for French artists and their sites in Paris, as the 20th century goes by. Starting on 9 September, her exhibition of 69 photographs and artworks will be shown at the Jordanian Plastic Artists' Association in Jebel Weibdeh. It runs until 30 September.

■ The relationship between man and nature is the exhibition that is currently running at the Orient Gallery in Shimsani. The exhibit, displaying the works of artists from various Arab countries, ends today, Thursday.

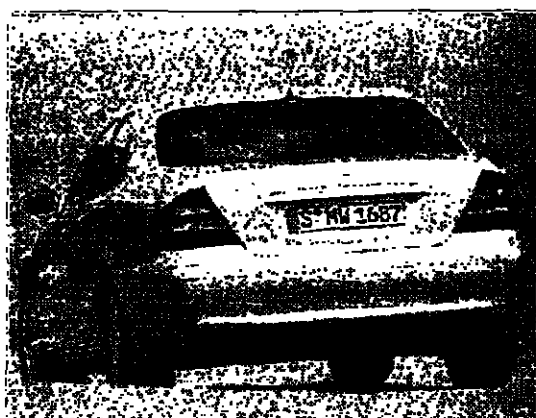
10 September
■ The Summer '98 exhibition continues at Darat Al Funun. This is an annual exhibition of arts and graphics from different Arab artists. Besides the art exhibit, there are many art lectures almost everyday.

■ There is an exhibition of wrought iron furniture by Jordanian artist Saleem Baddak at Al Baydar Hall in Kan Zaman village. It continues until 17 September.

Films
■ ET, a science fiction movie, starring Dee Wallace and Drew Barrymore, is showing at the American Center, today, 10 September at 5 pm.

Seminars
■ "American Politics and the Middle East" is a lecture series being presented by Judith Kipper at the American Center on 22 September. Ms. Kipper is the Co-Director of the Middle East Studies Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington.

Daimler-Benz launches new S-Class



GERMAN CAR manufacturer, Mercedes-Benz, will be introducing its new flagship saloon from the end of October in the showrooms of European branches and dealers of the Stuttgart-based motor manufacturer.

With its elegant, dynamic appearance and its many technical innovations, the new saloon will continue the worldwide success of its predecessor model, which has been produced in a total of 402,000 units and has attained an average world market of almost 42 percent in its segments over the last few years.

Like its predecessor, the new S-class will also be a technical trend-setter for the entire passenger car-market. The new Mercedes flagship incorporates more than 30 innovations that have given rise to a total of 340 patent applications from Daimler engineers.

Rula Shukairy Heroine of space and light



By Kofi Atta
Special To The Star

ONE OF the many strange things you'll find in the art world is that there are many male artists with ordinary qualities. However, very few female artists have outstanding talent.

Rula Shukairy's 'ingenuity' radiates in her 51 extraordinary paintings on display currently at the French Cultural Center. Her paintings, although non-representational, can still be read—although this depends on the visitor's imagination.

She gives her admirers a surface from which they can define their own ideas. She uses fantasy to create her paintings into rhythm, music and feelings. But what is most apparent to any visitor to the exhibition, is her skill at relating opposite forces (like space and light) to get unity.

Space and light are very essential to life. Very few painters are able to create space and paint light. This is where she is so outstanding. Shukairy's abstract paintings produce light themselves, and radiate it to the outside.

Through her use of China ink and acrylic, and the power to invent space and light, along with her choice of simple materials anyone can use, she brings forth many emotional feelings. In one painting—her biggest—she incorporates space and light, creating a brilliance of colors, and a stimulating effect.

All the pieces on display sparkle like diamonds against the vast white space of the walls in the exhibition hall—except for four beautifully arranged paintings on a table at the entrance hall. The exhibition includes 10 large pieces, 10 medium sized ones, and the rest are small paintings. Almost all the small exhibits displayed in attractive rustic wooden frames to give additional light.

Shukairy's paintings reflect her feelings and motivations as a woman. She creates a world full of emotions and fantasies—sometimes utopian, yet always a world full of the realities of life. The paintings are characterized with the kind of openness in the surface of her work.

The space behind the different surfaces are such that they make people speak of their inner patterns, beliefs, demands, lures, lusts and obsessions. Her art is spiritual, and is the landscape of her soul. The physical and emotional appearances of light in her work radiates to the outside.

Since her successful March 1997 group exhibition in Paris, she has been able to carve a niche for herself and has become a veritable oriental gem among Jordanian artists. Especially, with her talent and zeal to re-introduce light in Jordanian arts. She has brought a new art technique to Jordan in particular, and to the art world in general.

The confidence and optimism projected by the space and light are what gives Rula Shukairy's work its distinctive look. Her exhibition, under the patronage of her excellency Mrs In'am Muft with co-time until 30 September at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Al Weibdeh, Amman.

http://star.com.jo

The Star's GUIDE

Programs on JTV
from 12 — 18 September

ENGLISH PROGRAMS

SATURDAY
3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—Postman Pat (Cartoon)
3:30—Clowning Around
4:00—Neighbors (Drama)
4:30—Scandi Nature (Doc.)
5:00—French Prog.
6:00—Sea Quest
7:00—News in French
7:15—French Prog.
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—You Bet Your Life
8:00—Cinema Cinema
8:30—Prism (Talk Show)
9:10—Sirens (Drama)
10:00—News At Ten
10:30—Film: A Mind To Murder
12:00—Country Music

SUNDAY
3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—Pink Panther (Cart.)
3:20—Pumpkin Patch
3:30—The Adventures of the Black Stallion
4:00—American Chart Show
5:00—NBA
6:00—French Program
7:00—News in French
7:15—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Life's Most Embarrassing Moments
8:00—World Net
8:30—Challenges
9:00—Renegade (Drama)
10:00—News in English
10:30—Touching Evil (Mini Series, Part 1)

MONDAY
3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—Highlander (Cartoon)
3:30—The Genie from Down Under (Drama)
4:00—Neighbors (Drama)
4:30—Last Frontiers (Doc.)
5:00—French Program
6:00—Sea Quest



Hope & Gloria. Monday at 7:35 pm.

7:00—News in French
7:15—French Program
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Hope & Gloria
8:00—Perspective
8:30—World Net
9:10—Good Guys, Bad Guys
10:00—News At Ten
10:30—Touching Evil (Part 2)

TUESDAY
3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—The Pink Panther Under (Drama)
4:00—Neighbors (Drama)
4:30—Life Choices (Doc.)
5:00—Royal Blood (Doc.)
6:00—French Program

WEDNESDAY
3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—The Adventures of Teddy Ruxpin
3:30—Halfway Across The Galaxy & Turn Left

Amman cinemas

- Philadelphia I (Tel: 4634149): Anna Karenina
- Philadelphia II (Tel: 4634149): Nasser
- Galleria I (Tel: 079 33430): Godzilla
- Galleria II (Tel: 079 33430): City Of Angels
- Plaza (Tel: 5699238): Al Za'atun (Arabic)
- Concord I (Tel: 5677420): Nasser
- Concord II (Tel: 5677420): Up Close & Personal

4:00—The Album Show
5:00—French Program
6:15—Sea Quest
7:00—News in French
7:15—French Program
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Keeping Mum (Com.)
8:00—Envoy Special
8:30—Computer Chronicles
9:10—Kung-Fu
10:00—News at Ten
10:30—Chicago Hope
12:00—Bugs (Drama)

THURSDAY
3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—Animated Hero Classics (Cartoon)
3:30—Star Runner (Drama)
4:00—L'Ecole Des Fans
4:30—Blue Water Dreaming (Documentary)
5:00—NBA Games
6:15—Sliders
7:00—News in French
7:15—French Prog.
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Family Matters
8:00—Great Romances of the 20th Century
8:30—Dr Quinn Medicine Woman (Drama)
9:10—Oprah Winfrey
10:00—News at Ten
10:30—Film: For the Boys
12:00—Can't Hurry Love

FRIDAY
3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—The Adventures of Teddy Ruxpin (Cartoon)
3:30—The Borrowers
4:00—Film: Fight for Honor
6:15—Les Cles De Fort Boyard (Quiz)
7:00—News in French
7:15—French Prog.
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Fresh Prince of Bel Air

8:00—Life on the Digital Edge
8:30—The Seven Wonders of the World
9:10—Babylon 5
10:00—News at Ten
10:30—The X Files (Drama)
12:00—Big Sky (Drama)

PROGRAMMES EN FRANÇAIS SAMEDI
17:00—Fant pas rêver
19:00—Le Journal
19:15—Magazine L'œil de Colomb

DIMANCHE
18:00—Bonne espérance
19:00—Le Journal
19:15—E-M6

LUNDI
17:00—Thalassa
19:00—Le Journal
19:15—Magazine scientifique

MARDI
18:00—Les cœurs brûlés
19:00—Le Journal
19:15—Fractales

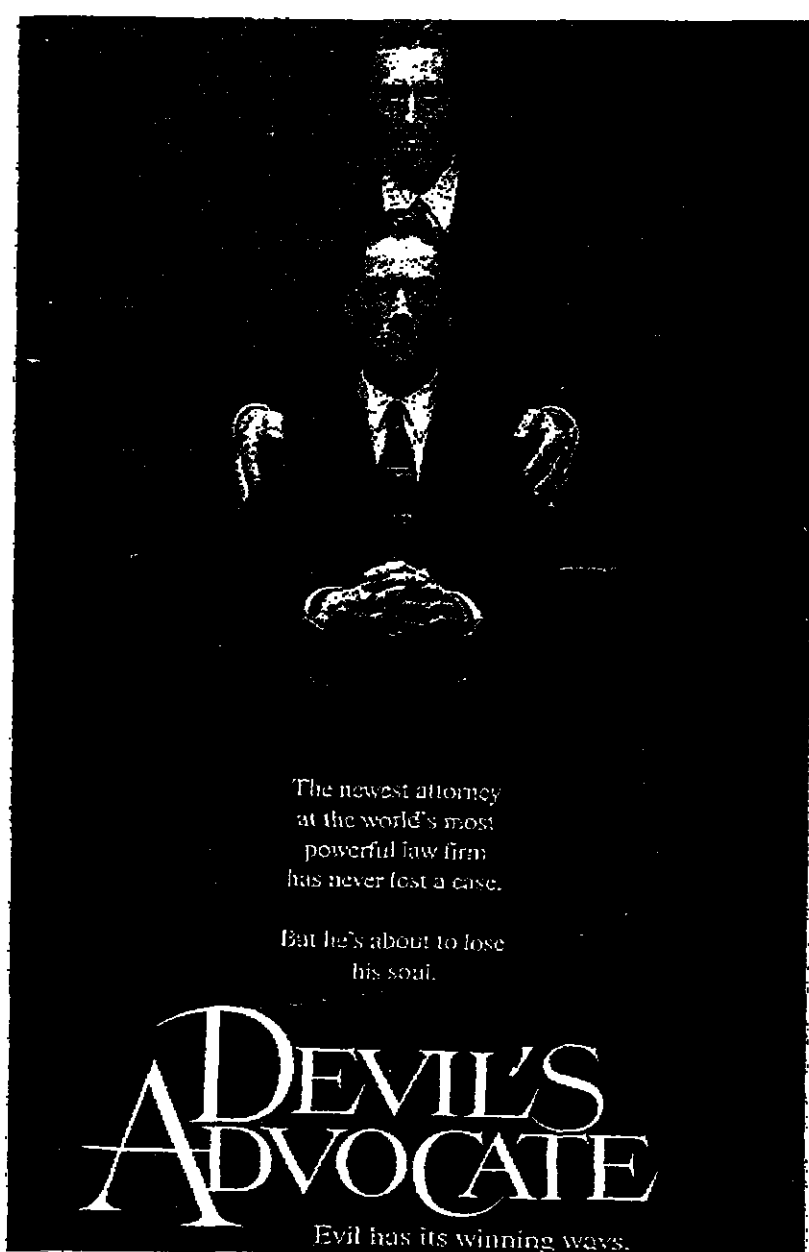
MERCREDI
17:00—Ushuaia
19:00—Le Journal
19:15—E-M6
20:00—Envoyé spécial

JEUDI
16:00—L'école des fans
19:00—Le Journal
19:15—Magazine L'œil de Colomb

VENREDI
18:15—Fort Boyard
19:00—Le Journal
19:15—AB6 in Terre

Programs are subject to change by JTV

FILM



The newest attorney at the world's most powerful law firm has never lost a case.

But he's about to lose his soul.

THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATE

Evil has its winning ways.

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE

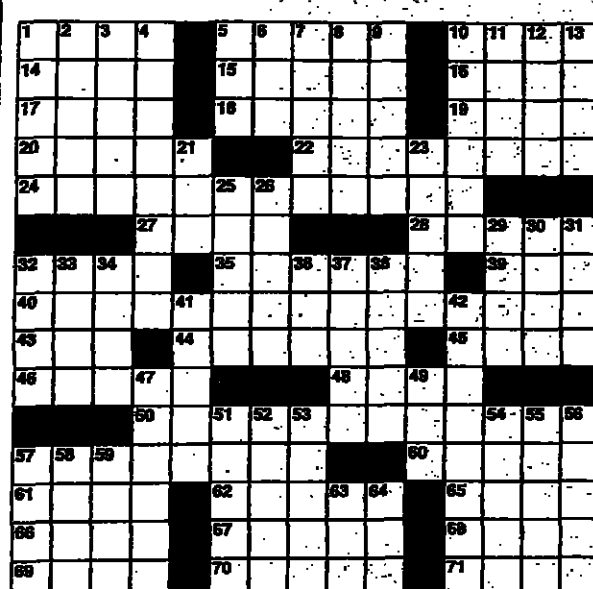
Hotshot attorney Kevin Lomax's 64-0 case record has brought him a tempting offer from an elite New York firm. But the job Lomax accepts isn't what it seems. The Devil is in the details. In this gleeful, modern gothic fable, Keanu Reeves plays eager Lomax and Al Pacino is the charismatic firm founder who knows there are cases to be won... and souls to be lost. From Lomax's court triumphs and skyrocket rise to its double-twist ending, "The Devil's Advocate" is red-hot entertainment. Lomax's life, wife (Charize Theron) and soul are on the line. He's landed a job that's Heaven on Earth... which can lead him straight to Hell.



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CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS
1 Chagall
5 Term
10 Pope
14 Third man
15 Nile dam
16 Seed cover-
17 contenders
18 Tatan
19 Pleasant
20 old style
22 Listed
24 Cagney-Patt
27 Hebrides
28 Island
29 Andes rumi-
32 African plant
35 TV actor,
39 Sty resident
40 Glenn Miller
43 Unit
44 Leave in the
lurch

DOWN
1 Personage
2 Large snake
3 Souvenir
4 Haberdash-
5 Frisco
6 May abbr.
7 Clemens
8 West Indies
country
9 Over
10 Boone
11 Tampa's
stater abbr.
12 Where snails
eyes appear
13 Lupa
21 Tokyo, once
23 A.A.
25 - of robes
in her hair
26 Hebrides
29 Punta del
Element of a
moral code
31 Name in
electronics
32 Beginning
33 Crescent-
shaped fig-
ure

-This Week's-
HOROSCOPES

By Linda Black

Weekly Tip: The sun's in Cancer, better for staying home. Clean the place while the moon's in tidy Virgo.

Aries (March 21-April 19). Work on a domestic project and make it perfect. Don't get into a hassle with your partner if you can avoid it.

Taurus (April 20-May 20). You're learning. The lesson is love. Your home's the best place to talk about it.

Gemini (May 21-June 21). If you're into budgeting, start saving for a household item. If you want to move up, it's the down payment or cleaning deposit you're stashing away.

Cancer (June 22-July 22). Your mind is like a steel trap. You hold onto what you learn, so hang out with people who can teach you something.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22). You're under pressure but that's OK. If you do what's required you could make extra money. That could be quite handy.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You're the brains behind the organization. Looks like your friends know it, too. It's about time you got some acknowl-
edgement.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You have a vague feeling that something's over-
due. Better go through your list of
papers one more time. You may find
something has to go out.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You'll
get the most done working with a
team. Your productivity will be awe-
some. You could set new records. Be
cautious.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Little
things are likely to trip you up, so pay
attention. There are a couple of finan-
cial considerations, but your friend-
ships are thriving.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Open
up your imagination to new possi-
bilities. They're all around you. Life
seems more confining as you run into
rules and regulations. Don't let them
stop you.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). If you
can get the paperwork done, the loan
you want could be available. Make
sure you dot all your "i"s and cross all
your "t"s" perfectly.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20). A part-
ner will help you find your way
through the confusion. You bring the
luck and the other person brings the
organizational skills.

**If You're Having a Birthday This
Week:** Education's your theme this
year. You'll learn easily, so take tough
subjects.

NOILLOS

SOLUTION

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NOILLOS

SOLUTION

PERKY & BEANZ by Russell Myers



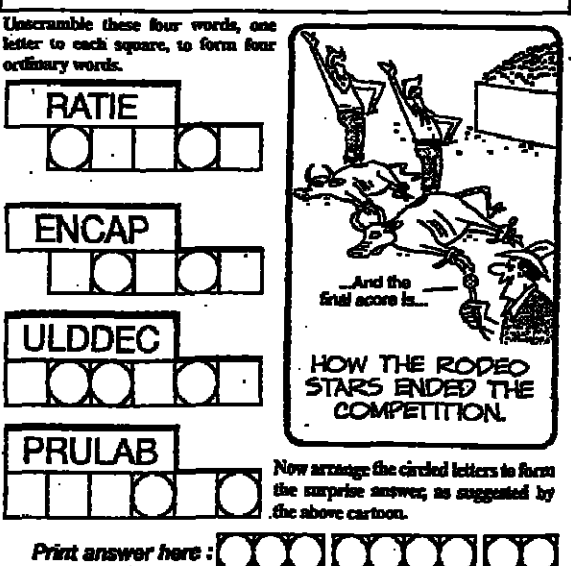
ELWOOD by Ben Templeton & Tom Forman



CATFISH by Fred Wagner & Tom Cone



Jumble



Print answer here: _____

Answer: How the rodeo stars ended the competition —

Words of Wisdom

Let your instincts lead you when you don't know where to turn. The right path will become apparent.

If everyone minded their own business, we'd have nothing to talk about.

Use your heart when dealing with everyone else, and your head when dealing with yourself.

If you want to make a good living, be prepared to earn it.

It is rewarding to feel as if you've done a job well; it is disastrous to feel as if you've done a job perfectly.

Delay makes a difficult job almost impossible.

Top 10 Albums in Amman

- The Moffays: A New beginning
- Emma Shaplin: Carmine Meo
- Various Artists: Now 40
- Various Artists: Frish hits 98
- Various Artists: Big Nux 98
- Various Artists: Sunshine reggae 2
- 911: Moving on
- Lenny Kravitz: 5
- Smashing Pumpak: A Dore

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Le Jourdain

Supplément en français du Star

Le secret bien gardé des statues d'Ain Ghazal par Véronique Abu-Nijm

La première statue que connaît le Proche-Orient néolithique compte parmi les tentatives et les efforts de l'homme pour défier la mort. Le village d'Ain Ghazal a conservé des statues entières façonnées sur armatures végétales. Le site est aujourd'hui englobé dans la banlieue industrielle au nord d'Amman, sur le cours du Zarqa. Ce gisement du VII^e millénaire, qui s'étend sur au moins douze hectares, est le plus grand village néolithique actuellement connu pour cette période, au Proche et Moyen-Orient.

C'est avec la découverte de ces statues (voir ci-contre) qu'Ain Ghazal nous étonne le plus. À l'époque où la céramique n'était pas maîtrisée, les villageois fabriquaient des mannequins de chaume qu'ils enveloppaient d'un tissu. Ces poupées dont la taille atteignait presque un mètre étaient ensuite recouvertes de plâtre. Les visages peints reproduisent des physiologies diverses. Il s'agit donc de portraits précis de défunts

particulièrement honorés. Ces statues - près de quarante - ont été retrouvées dans des caches à l'intérieur des habitations. Au VII^e millénaire, en effet, les sépultures étaient incluses dans l'espace domestique ou parfois déposées dans des demeures abandonnées. A Ain Ghazal, de vastes édifices que l'on suppose être des temples prouvent l'existence d'une religion officielle et des pratiques culturelles collectives, à côté de rituels privés et domestiques dont témoignent d'innombrables objets funéraires. Selon une des nombreuses hypothèses avancées, ces statues perpétueraient une classe de prêtres. Il est vrai qu'à une exception près, il s'agit de représentations masculines. Elles étaient peut-être exhumées lors de cérémonies officielles. Cependant, sans aucun document écrit, les statues d'Ain Ghazal ne révéleront jamais leur mystère et du fond des âges, continueront de leurs grands yeux blancs à harceler notre ignorance. ■



Politique

Les Frères musulmans sont partout

La confrérie des «barbus» maintient plus que jamais son influence dans toutes les couches de la société civile, avec une action particulière en direction de la jeunesse. En attendant une revanche politique.

1945, les Frères musulmans entretiennent les meilleures relations avec le palais, analyse un expert de la scène politique jordanienne, la confrérie a eu tous les moyens de s'implanter dans la société, d'autant que le pouvoir hachémite leur a laissé les mains libres. De plus, les FM se sont engagés comme association caritative, un statut qui leur a permis d'échapper à l'interdiction des partis politiques de 1957 à 1992.

Désormais, ils s'appuient sur un tissu d'organisations, de centres et d'associations impressionnant, grâce auquel ils s'insinuent dans toutes les couches de la société. Au cœur de cette toile d'araignée aux mailles serrées, le Centre social islamique (CSI), à quelques pas du siège des FM à Abdali et de l'hôpital islamique, gère un ensemble de 40 jardins d'enfants et écoles, situés surtout dans les grandes villes. La confrérie poursuit encore son travail d'influence, en axant davantage son action en direction de la jeunesse. Bien entendu, il y a

longtemps qu'ils se sont attaqués au noyau des conseils des étudiants. Cette année, les islamistes ont ainsi rafé la mise dans cinq grandes universités, dont le Yarmouk et l'Université de Jordanie.

Mariages collectifs

Plus représentatif peut-être d'un renforcement du discours à l'attention des jeunes, c'est la création de l'association Al-Afak, fin 1993 par l'un des leaders des FM, Abdul Latif Arabiyat. Cette organisation favorise les mariages précoces en accordant une aide financière aux jeunes fiancés. Plus de 80 couples ont bénéficié du coup de pouce d'Al-Afak. «De cette façon, nous réduisons le taux de célibat qui ne cesse d'augmenter parmi les jeunes, se félicite Abdul Hamid Dahir, un des candidats aux noces collectives, car le coût d'un mariage traditionnel est trop élevé. De même, le CSI continue d'offrir des aides aux étudiants désargentés. Majid Shihab est

l'un de ces bénéficiaires reconnaissants : «Après mon baccalauréat, je voulais poursuivre mes études de médecine, mais mon

père est ouvrier avec un salaire de 120 JD et huit enfants à charge. J'ai failli arrêter mais grâce aux aides du Centre isla-

mique, je suis maintenant en deuxième année à la faculté de médecine».

Reste le point noir de l'influence des «barbus» : le terrain politique. En raison du boycott, les islamistes ne représentent plus, à présent, que 5% des députés de l'Assemblée nationale, contre près du tiers en 1989, au début du processus de démocratisation. Les FM et le FAI ne sont plus représentés que par deux députés (notamment le très médiatique, Abdulrahman Al-Kayleh), d'ailleurs en rupture avec leurs mouvements pour avoir désobéi à l'obligation de boycott.

Il s'agit maintenant pour la confrérie et son bras politique de dépasser les dissensions qui les traversent (le boycott avait été accepté du bout des lèvres par le FAI et ne semble toujours pas digéré), et de présenter un discours politique capable de transcender le désempolement général vis-à-vis des partis politiques. ■

Le Jourdain



Avec 200 millions de JD (chiffre officiel), les «barbus» sont aussi puissants que les fondations royales, comme celle de la Reine Noor.

Hezb El-Tahrir : un islamisme clandestin pour le retour du califat

Fondé en 1952 à Jérusalem par le Jordanien d'origine palestinienne Taki El-Din Al-Nabhani, Hezb El-Tahrir, le Parti de la libération islamique (PLI) propage des idées extrémistes. Ses membres, en majorité des riches et des intellectuels, veulent renverser les régimes arabes actuels afin d'imposer un mode de vie islamique conservateur et installer un califat, c'est-à-dire un État islamique à l'échelle du monde arabe. Ils sont présents dans de nombreux pays de la région mais aussi en Europe.

Pour arriver à leurs fins, ils sont prêts à employer la force. Ils l'ont déjà fait, avec plusieurs coups d'État, en 1973 en Égypte, en 72 en Irak et en Jordanie en 69. Le mouvement est soupçonné d'avoir commis d'autres actions violentes, qui n'ont pas été

revendiquées.

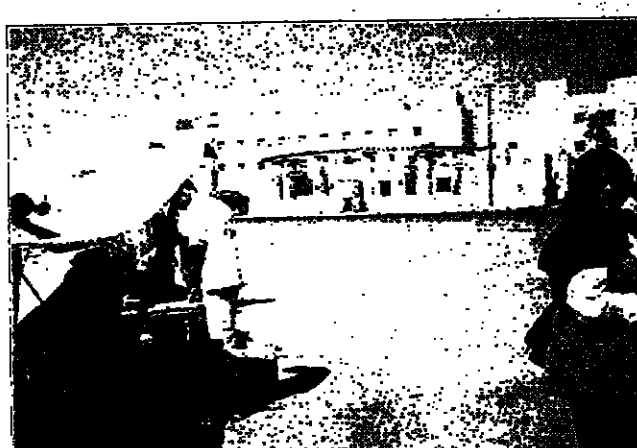
En 1956, le PLI entre dans le Parlement jordanien avec un député. Mais à la suite de dissensions internes, il est interdit. Son expérience «démocratique» n'aura duré qu'un an. Cependant, son retour sur la scène politique est inévitable. Le parti a été interdit à la fin des années 80. En 1993, il a été réformé et a été autorisé à participer aux élections locales.

Depuis sa fondation, plus de 600 de ses membres ont été arrêtés par les services de sécurité jordanien. Le parti a été interdit à la fin des années 80. En 1993, il a été réformé et a été autorisé à participer aux élections locales.

Immigration

Kermesse américaine à Amman

Comme chaque année, Washington organise une loterie. L'enjeu : un visa de résident à vie au pays de l'Oncle Sam. Pour beaucoup de Jordaniens dopés par les médias, c'est le «rêve américain» qui s'offre à eux. Enquête au cœur du mauvais goût américain.



Les écrivains publics s'installent devant l'Ambassade américaine pour aider les «joueurs» à remplir leur bulletin de participation. Bienvenue à la loterie du cynisme.

«Ce que j'aime par-dessus tout chez les américains, c'est leur folie, cette façon de s'amuser de tout», Marouf, 37 ans, a le regard plongé dans le rêve. Les cheveux grisonnés, plaqués en arrière, les lunettes de soleil dressées sur la tête, il semble cultiver l'allure d'un réalisateur du Nouveau Monde, dévoré par l'ambition et le regret. Marouf est né en Jordanie, et travaille dans une entreprise de transport maritime. Comme 25.000 autres compatriotes, chaque année il attend patiemment devant l'ambassade-américaine, pour obtenir un bulletin de participation et espérer échapper à son destin en jouant à ce que Washington nomme sans complexe la «loterie des visas» et dont le but avoué est de réguler l'immigration.

Ce concours divise le monde en six régions géographiques et est ouvert aussi bien aux Philippines qu'à la France ou au Zimbabwe. Pour chaque pays le nombre de visas est proportionnel au nombre d'immigrants sur les cinq dernières années. Mais bien entendu, ce calcul

mettra à l'aise mon pays. Je suis avant tout pragmatique : je suis prêt à aller n'importe où, où il y a un avenir économique».

Les motivations peuvent être plus raisonnables. «Je veux terminer mes études d'ingénieur dans les meilleures conditions possibles», déclare Omar, 18 ans. Son cadet Mohamed est déterminé : «Ayant réussi mon baccalauréat, je voudrais étudier là-bas, mais revenir en Jordanie». Pas de «miracle américain» dans les paroles de ces adolescents. Simplement le souvenir d'un voyage qui leur a fait apprécier le mode de vie «facile» et la gentillesse locale. Et la conscience qu'ils font partie des plus chanceux. Car une des conditions requises pour participer au concours est d'avoir un niveau d'études supérieures ou à défaut de qualification d'une expérience professionnelle d'au moins deux ans au cours des cinq dernières années nécessitant deux ans de formation. Une façon d'aider le hasard pour ne pas accueillir toute la misère du monde.

Pourtant le concours biaise à l'avantage de la foule. Comme chaque année, WTA a installé son petit commerce provisoire de photos d'identité. Mais comme pour s'excuser, il explique que les affaires ne sont pas excellentes et ajoute fièrement qu'il a une licence de l'État. Un parking improvisé est rempli d'une centaine de voitures. Le Ministère de l'Intérieur jordanien a installé des stands donnant à ce système défilé des allures de Kermesse. L'ambassade américaine, est là pour aider les participants, et leur expliquer les règles du jeu.

Gagner de l'argent. Marouf lui est bon joueur. Après deux tentatives ratées et malgré les échos négatifs de ses amis participants, il continue, serein. Mais reste persuadé qu'il n'a aucune chance. Pourquoi une telle détermination ? «L'idée m'est venue grâce à un ami exilé aux USA. En quelques années, son niveau de vie s'est amélioré. Comme lui, je veux devenir un homme d'affaires. En devenant américain, je pourrais gagner de l'argent très facilement». Pour lui le rêve américain est une religion, l'opium qui lui fait croire en l'impossible. Mais il tient à préciser : «Si je perds, je m'en va».

La vie de sa famille est en danger. Sans aucune autre forme de reconnaissance, l'Ambassade a refusé sa participation à la loterie. Humiliée, elle menace de se suicider. Williams vient lui aussi d'Irak et avait un poste important à la direction des transports à Bagdad. A 50 ans, il rêve de refaire sa vie dans la mécanique et surtout de rejoindre sa famille. Il tente sa chance pour la quatrième fois.

6 à 7 millions

Rania, 20 ans, et Haitham, 23 ans, sont des novices encore enthousiastes. Pour ce frère et cette sœur, vivre en Amérique est un rêve, un espoir formidable que l'annonce dans un journal leur a donné un matin. «C'est la nation la plus puissante du monde», affirme Haitham, les yeux brillants. Ses sources, il les a obtenues à la librairie de l'ambassade mais confesse aussi que son jugement est largement inspiré par les séries télévisées et les films. Seuls les États-Unis, lui donneront la possibilité de s'accomplir pleinement dans ses études et de devenir riche. Mais il devient embarrassé en songeant à la possibilité que le sort le sépare de sa sœur, que faire dans ce cas ? Il préfère ne pas y songer.

Comme les 6 à 7 millions de candidats chaque année, il regardera les résultats en juin 1999. S'il gagne, il devra subir une nouvelle sélection pour harmoniser les chiffres réels avec les objectifs de l'immigration. Puis une enquête révélera si son passé est conforme à la loi américaine. Le seulement le rêve deviendra réalité. Ou peut-être aura-t-il changé d'avis, constatant que la nation la plus puissante du monde n'est pas forcément la plus aimable. ■

Antoine Marette

Éclaboussures

Trouble transparence

Le vaisseau Majail a donc pris l'eau. Louvoyer sur l'onde trouble du lac de Tibériade lui a valu naufrage. Cette fois, c'est promis juré : filtres, anti-parasites et autres passoirs sont mis en place pour assurer la transparence... de l'eau qui arrive désormais cristalline dans nos verres et des informations qui arrivent authentiques dans notre poste de télévision. Quelle chance ! Plus besoin de courir chercher la flotte chez l'épicier qui spéculait sur les bouteilles, plus la peine de prêter l'oreille aux radios étrangères pour se tenir au courant des problèmes du pays. Voilà la transparence livrée à domicile ! Oh, politiquement parlant, le mot d'ordre n'est pas révolutionnaire : promis juré, ce n'était déjà de longue date - depuis cinq ou six ans - mais cette fois, après les spéciosités malsaines qui ont embué l'atmosphère estivale, ce n'est plus que de coutume. L'élu a été pour le moins purifiant et le gouvernement en ressort débarrassé.

En fait, cela coule de source : être démocratique ne suffit pas, il faut être (répétés-le) transparent ! Qu'est-ce que cela signifie au juste ? Depuis que la transparence est devenue une station obligée de tout discours politique qui se respecte, son sens tend à se dissoudre : garantie de franchise ; de sincérité, pour les uns, manœuvre propre à s'approprier la confiance aveugle du peuple, pour les autres. Respecter les citoyens, reprendront les premiers, faire croire qu'on ne les prend pas pour des idiots, rétorqueront les seconds. Quoi qu'il en soit, la transparence a ses limites : elle n'ira pas jusqu'à révéler les parasites restés coincés dans les filtres.

Néanmoins, si l'information est limpide, c'est bien parce qu'elle a été soigneusement traitée. A moins que l'on ait la chance de boire à la source. Mais dans quelque pays que ce soit, aucun gouvernement ne mènera jamais ses ouailles s'abreuver à la vérité. Transparence se met alors à rimer singulièrement avec apparence... C'est mieux que rien. Et si le doute persiste, rien ne nous empêche de soumettre les informations reçues à quelques minutes de réflexion, comme on maintient aussi à ébullition l'eau que l'on veut saine. Réflexion silencieuse bien sûr. Car si transparence de la part des dirigeants vis-à-vis du public il y a, dans le sens inverse, c'est l'opacité qui est de mise. Dans ces conditions, rien ne viendra troubler la transparence gouvernementale. ■

V. A.-N.



Pour se marier, les jeunes couples peuvent recevoir jusqu'à 500 JD de la part de l'association islamique Al-Afak.

«Quand les circonstances sont difficiles, il est de notre devoir en tant que musulmans de tendre la main aux autres musulmans». Le Prince Hassan a profité, cette semaine, d'un atelier sur les œuvres de charité du royaume pour marquer une fois encore l'importance de l'islamisme aux yeux du régime.

Au début de cette année, Bassam Omoush, membre de la confrérie des Frères musulmans (FM), rejoignait le gouvernement pour s'occuper du ministère du Développement administratif. Lors du dernier remaniement ministériel, il a été conservé à son poste. Il y a quelques mois, le roi Hussein rencontrait les présidents des associations professionnelles, largement dominées par les Frères musulmans. Après avoir reçu récemment

les principaux leaders islamistes, le Prince Hassan a donc lancé mardi un appel aux organismes islamiques de charité pour qu'ils développent leurs efforts d'assistance.

Depuis 53 ans

Autant de messages clairs, autant de tentatives de réconciliation avec un mouvement incontrôlable en Jordanie. A la suite des élections législatives de 1997 boycottées conjointement par les FM et le Front d'Action Islamique (FAI), un certain froid avait surgi entre les islamistes et le régime. Certains commentateurs avaient même craint le divorce.

Aujourd'hui les rapports semblent retrouver leur convivialité d'antan. On ne rompt pas facilement après plus de quarante ans de soutien mutuel. «Depuis leur fondation en

Exposition

Shukairy : et la lumière fut

Pour la troisième fois, Rula Shukairy, peintre jordanienne de l'abstrait, revient au Centre culturel français pour nous présenter ses dernières créations. Rencontre avec une artiste éclairée.

Plus d'une quarantaine de tableaux ornent les cimaises du deuxième étage du CCF comme les étoiles illuminent un ciel noir. La lumière passe avant tout dans l'œuvre de Rula.

«Peu nombreux sont les peintres qui sont capables de peindre la lumière, complimenter dans une critique Hans Peter, ancien directeur du musée de Düsseldorf, les tableaux de Shukairy contiennent leur propre lumière et la diffusent autour d'eux».

À plus de 40 ans, Rula n'en finit pas d'explorer les trésors de la peinture abstraite dont elle fut le premier chantre féminin en Jordanie. Ses tableaux, non titrés, montrent-ils des hommes, des animaux, des maisons ? Cette abstraction, à laquelle nous ne sommes certainement pas habitués, nous interpelle et nous questionne. Reste la lumière évidente et permanente à l'intérieur de tous les tableaux, quelles que soient les couleurs. Rula Shukairy nous entoure la porte de ses secrets : une voix murmurée et surtout un sourire qui éclaire des traits chics, mais sans affectation.

Le Jourdain : Pouvez-vous nous raconter vos débuts dans la peinture ? Rula Shukairy : J'ai commencé à peindre pour mon plaisir. Je participais à des expositions collectives à Beyrouth. Puis j'ai rencontré l'artiste Faher Al-Nissa à Zide, qui m'a beaucoup apporté. Elle m'a appris la manière de comprendre une peinture. Un tableau n'est jamais un objet sans âme que l'on oublie, une fois terminé. Au contraire, c'est une partie de l'artiste. Il faut le sentir, le comprendre pour créer quelque chose de beau.

À la suite de cette rencontre, j'ai réalisé ma première exposition. Depuis j'ai participé à bien d'autres en France, au Liban ou en Jordanie. À présent, la peinture est une partie de moi-même, je ne pourrais plus la négliger.

Le Jourdain : La lumière est au centre de vos œuvres. Que signifie-t-elle pour vous ? R. S. : La lumière est un principe de vie. On ne peut imaginer un seul jour sans elle. Pourtant si tout le monde la voit, peu de gens ressentent vraiment sa force. Dans mes tableaux, je veux redonner aux gens l'espoir et l'amour, même si je peins la nuit.

Le Jourdain : Pourquoi ? R. S. : Je ne sais pas exactement. Peut-être à cause de la tranquillité de la nuit, ou bien je sens que mon âme est alors en harmonie ou simplement cela m'est naturel.

Le Jourdain : De quel tableau choisiriez-vous de nous parler en priorité ? R. S. : C'est impossible à dire. Les tableaux sont comme des lettres que j'envoie aux gens. Chacun d'eux a son propre message, son propre style. Je ne préfère pas tel ou tel tableau pour telle ou telle raison, je ne pourrais pas vous expliquer le message qu'ils contiennent car c'est à chacun de les interpréter. Je laisse volontairement le champ libre à l'interprétation, un espace d'expression entre l'œuvre et le spectateur. ■

Propos recueillis par Fatin Mansi

Exposition Rula Shukairy, au CCF jusqu'au 30 septembre. Entrée libre.



Retrouvez le Jourdain chaque jeudi dans le Star

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Le mot de la semaine

"ÉCOLE"

Fin des vacances, il faut se remettre au travail. Mais vous êtes un petit Grec du temps de Platon, vous devez le travail, vive l'école ! Car scholè dont est issu le mot sans doute l'Amour, signifie le temps libre, le repos, la tranquillité. À l'origine, scholè est donc le bon temps que l'on ne se procure pas en fréquentant maîtres de rhétorique, de philosophie ou de philosophie. Car ce mot, et toute la famille qui en dérive, exprime en plus de la notion de loisir, l'activité sociale, la pratique à loisir. Par exemple, scholastikos, désignant un maître, qui consacrait son temps libre à l'étude. Dans le latin du Moyen Âge, cet adjectif a été repris dans la forme scholasticus et a donné lieu à l'adjectif substantivé français : la scolastique qui est l'enseignement philosophique et religieux dispensé par les convents puis les premières universités.

L'école était devenue bien plus contraignante qu'un loisir. Il a fallu trouver un autre terme pour désigner les périodes de repos. Paradoxalement, vacances comporte la même idée d'origine qu'école : le latin vacare signifie être vide, être libre, être oisif. C'est de ce verbe que sont tirés vacancier, vacances, vacillat, et vacuité, synonyme de plénitude. Le substantif vacance, dérivé de vacare, était synonyme de manque au Moyen Âge. Bref, dans une traduction étymologique, les vacances scolaires signifiaient donc «un manque de repos» ! ■

Véronique Abu-Nijmeh



L'école : du temps libre pour éduquer.

C'est la vie

L'agenda français d'Amman

Exposition

Geneviève Hoffman a photographié les cités d'artistes de Paris à la fin du XXème siècle. Ses clichés sont au Cercle des artistes plasticiens jordaniens (Dejbel Lweibdeh) jusqu'au 30 septembre.

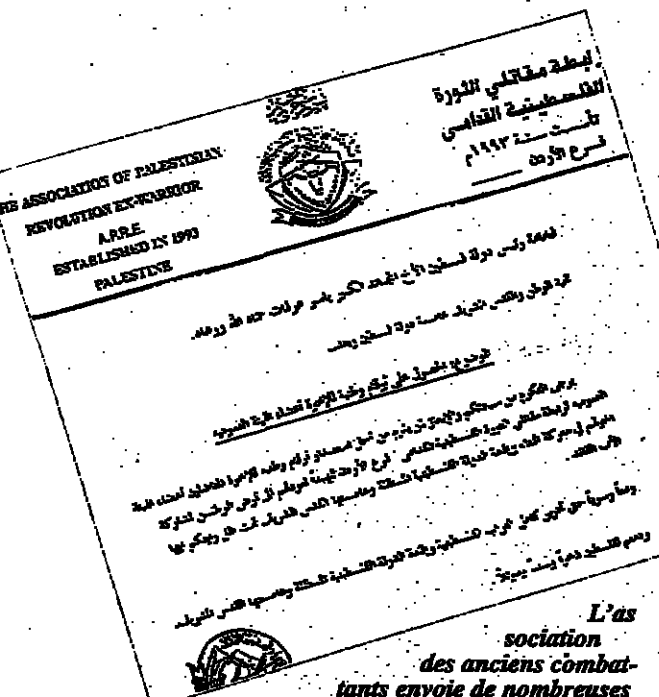
Cinéma

Cycle Portraits de femmes.

Lola Montes, film de Max Ophüls (1955), couleur, sous-titré en arabe, avec Marine Carol, Peter Ustinov. Une courtisane au passé prestigieux, maintenant déchu, est exhibée dans un cirque où elle se raconte en tableaux... Séances au Centre culturel français le lundi 14 septembre à 18h30 et 20h30.

Les oubliés de la révolution palestinienne

Visages sombres, corps abîmés, âmes blessées. Il était une fois les héros de la révolution palestinienne. Au Liban, en Jordanie, dans les Territoires occupés, ils ont combattu Israël. Aujourd'hui, ils sont près de 2000 en Jordanie à attendre une reconnaissance et une aide de l'Autorité palestinienne pour ne pas sombrer dans la misère et l'oubli.



Association of Palestinian Revolutionaries (APR) ESTABLISHED IN 1970 PALESTINE

Un immense de Djebel Hussein, un escalier de fer noir et un sous-sol. Drôle d'endroit pour rencontrer d'anciens combattants. C'est

plaintes des adhérents et surtout réclamer l'application de leurs droits légitimes, longtemps ignorés, selon eux, par les dirigeants de l'Organisation de Libération de la Palestine (OLP). Le local de l'association est un peu devenu un refuge ou un deuxième foyer pour ces guerriers à la retraite, ces simples soldats, loins des projecteurs des coulisses dorées de la diplomatie. Trop vieux ou trop estropiés pour travailler, ils viennent ici occuper leurs longues journées d'ennui.

Quotidiennement, ils sont une trentaine à se retrouver dans ce sous-sol glauque : pour se plaindre d'une vie dont les conditions ne cessent de se dégrader, pour solliciter un ou deux dinars à leurs compatriotes afin d'acheter du pain pour leur famille ou simplement pour raconter leur passé glorieux.

Ils boivent des thés et fument des cigarettes comme des secondes qu'on égare. Dans la salle principale, décorée des photos de Yasser Arafat et des martyrs palestiniens, la lumière ne pénètre

presque jamais. Sous cela a commencé avec les accords d'Oslo. On ne peut pas payer notre loyer. Les dirigeants de l'Autorité palestinienne nous disent qu'il n'y a pas d'argent pour nous parce que Israël ne paye pas l'argent qu'elle doit sur les taxes, dis-ent l'homme aux lunettes épaisses. Si les négociations ne reprennent pas avant dix ans, cela veut dire que nous n'allons pas être payés pendant tout ce temps ? De plus, la plupart ne vivent pas dans les camps de réfugiés et donc, ne reçoivent pas d'aides financières de la part de l'UNRWA, l'organisme des Nations Unies en charge des réfugiés.

2. Ils ne bénéficient pas d'une assurance maladie alors que la majorité d'entre eux en aurait besoin pour soigner efficacement les séquelles de leurs combats. «J'ai besoin de changer mes deux jambes artificielles mais je n'ai pas l'argent. J'ai fait plusieurs demandes auprès de l'Autorité palestinienne mais je n'ai pas reçu de réponse», raconte Zaydan Yaghmour.

3. Ils n'ont pas le droit de pénétrer dans les Territoires occupés car jusqu'à présent ils n'ont pas reçu ce qu'on appelle des numéros nationaux. Un numéro national est un papier qui permet à une personne d'entrer sur les Territoires occupés, d'obtenir une carte d'identité palestinienne et au bout du compte un passeport. Pour ce faire, il est bon d'avoir des relations «amicales» avec l'Autorité palestinienne puisque c'est elle qui soumet les demandes officielles de numéros nationaux aux autorités israéliennes. À cet égard, certains pensent qu'ils sont traités aussi mal, parce qu'ils sont toujours considérés comme les ennemis d'Israël. «Tous les gens reçoivent leur pension en Jordanie sauf ceux qui se sont battus contre les Israéliens», dit l'un d'eux en refusant de donner son nom. Une manière peut-être de se rassurer.

Le président de l'association prétend avoir envoyé plusieurs demandes à Yasser Arafat afin que les anciens combattants puissent avoir des numéros nationaux. Jusqu'à présent, pas de réponse. «Pourquoi on n'a pas le droit de rentrer ? s'interroge



Ceux qui viennent à l'association comptent sur la solidarité de leurs anciens compagnons d'armes.

Khader Abu Nijmeh, vice-président de l'association, l'homme qui a tiré la première balle qui, en 1965, annonçait le lancement de la révolution palestinienne, on ne demande ni argent, ni titres, ni voiture, nous voulons seulement mourir sur notre terre en Palestine. Mourir dans cette Palestine pour laquelle ils se sont battus et où ils ont encore de la famille et des propriétés.

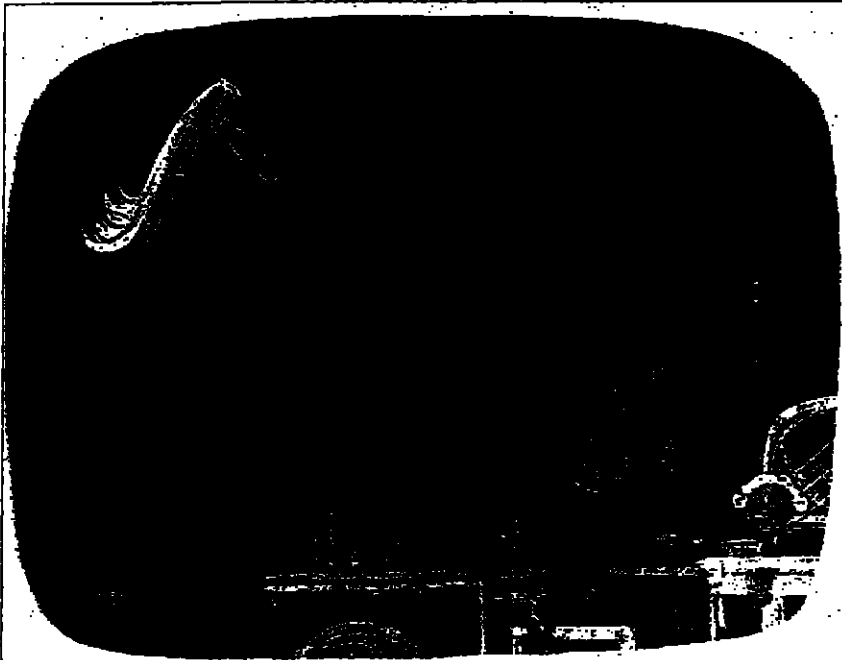
L'ambassadeur de Palestine en Jordanie Omar Al-Khatib confirme que la situation des anciens combattants est pénible mais qu'ils ne sont pas les seuls dans ce cas. Ensuite, il affirme que certains ont déjà reçu leurs numéros nationaux et sont bien installés en Palestine, avant de reconnaître que depuis un an et demi, les Israéliens ont arrêté

d'accorder ces numéros aux ex-militaires. Au sujet des pensions, l'ambassadeur estime que les anciens combattants n'ont rien reçu depuis trois mois seulement, et pas du tout depuis dix-huit mois comme ils le disent : «À l'ambassade, on essaye de les aider si on a l'argent mais ce n'est pas toujours évident». Pendant ce temps, dans un sous-sol de Djebel Hussein, Zaydan et les autres continuent d'envoyer du courrier à l'Autorité palestinienne en espérant enfin se faire entendre. Dernière bouteille à la mer : ils ont écrit pour annoncer leur décision de ne plus envoyer leurs enfants à l'école, faute d'argent pour les fournitures scolaires. ■

Saima Abu Sharar

Super Woman : dur, dur d'être une héroïne

La rue-le-bol des Super Women, un coup de gueule sociologique de Michèle Fitoussi (1987). En prêt au Centre culturel français.



«Tu n'as même pas remarqué que j'avais changé de coiffure».

Du féminisme pur et dur, on en revient. Enfin ! Ou plutôt déjà ! Car en vingt ans à peine, les théories d'émancipation ont su, mieux que des millénaires de patriarcat, enfermer à coup de «liberté, égalité, fraternité», les femmes dans une prison, celle de la vie à 1000 km/h et des 10.000 défis à relever, celle aussi qu'elles ont été les premières et les plus zélées à se construire.

Vous n'êtes pas convaincues ? Michèle Fitoussi vous y amène avec sa verve décoiffante et pleine d'humour. Décroiffante c'est peu dire. C'est plutôt la gifle pour toutes celles qui, en bonnes élèves de Groult, Hahmi, Dolto et compagnie, veulent le beurre et l'argent du beurre, le laitier et sa laitier, exigent tout et plus que tout d'elle-même, de la vie et des autres. Carrière professionnelle, avec diners et voyages d'affaires, enfants, un, deux, puis trois, qui ont intérêt à naître beaux, intelligents et éveillés : un homme génial, amoureux et «humoureux» qui, dès le seuil du bercail français, ou saurait, car ici commence l'irrésistible, c'est un des nombreux hic ! - échanger sans broncher costard contre t-shirt, mettre la main à la pâte et prendre l'étagère dans la chambre des enfants et torcher le petit dernier tout en restant tonique et viril au bon moment ; un look toujours impeccable, pour assaisonner la routine ; un look toujours impeccable, fantasiste, classique savamment négligé, sexy, cool, sportif, de c'est selon les circonstances... ; loisirs, triot, lecture de magazines, invitations, directives à donner à la femme de ménage,

à la noume, à la jeune fille au pair ; les courses, le dentiste, l'anniversaire chez le camarade de classe de l'ainé, la leçon de musique de la petite, et mille détails du quotidien à régler, cela dans un sweet home parfait et dans un humour que l'on voudrait moins maussade, car on n'en peut plus, on craque, un peu, beaucoup mais surtout en douce.

«Femelle» Caricatural ? pas vraiment. Des milliers de femmes se reconnaîtront, et malgré la gifle, elles seront infiniment reconnaissantes à Michèle Fitoussi d'avoir dénoncé leur calvaire et par là rendu hommage à leurs efforts pour affronter quotidiennement le morcellement de leur vie : ce puzzle auquel il manque toujours une pièce, c'est leur existence.

Michèle Fitoussi, journaliste au magazine féminin Elle ne nie pas qu'elle aussi, la vie de dingue, elle connaît. Elle est donc aux premières loges pour observer ce nouvel être hybride de cette fin de siècle, cette femme-homme, «femelle» dira-t-elle, ce gloton de vie, de travail, de suractivité, de consommation, de publicité et aussi de culpabilité. Car la liberté et l'égalité des sexes, ça se paie.

Tourbillon entre mille occupations, mais surtout pas celles du foyer. Super Woman se range les ongles, soigneusement peints et lissés, de ne pas être surpris du petit qui a 40 degrés de fièvre. À tout moment, le rôle que «n'en déplaît à Beauvoir - la nature a donné aux femmes (des cavernes, d'accord !), celui de s'occuper de leur progéniture, en bonnes épouses et bonnes mères, ça les titille. Alors vive la noume, cette sorte d'épouse de la Super Woman qui tiendra, à sa place, le rôle du bon génie du foyer.

Constat d'échec ? C'est le moins qu'on puisse dire ! À qui la faute ? Aux féministes bien sûr, à la pub et aux magazines... mais surtout aux femmes qui se sont engouffrées au galop dans le piège. Le pire, c'est que les plus pro des féministes ont aujourd'hui tourné casaque et prônent les vertus de la femme au foyer. Celles qui sont restées en course avouent que pour appliquer le programme, il faut être seule, sans mari et sans enfants, ce qui revient à tirer un trait sur une partie, et non des moindres de notre féminité (peut-on parler encore de «féminisme» ?).

Et l'avenir ? Michèle Fitoussi le conçoit sans ouverture. À force d'avoir vu leur mère tourbillonner et constaté leur absence, les filles des Super Women choisiront de rester peignardes aux pénates. Au contraire, leurs petites-filles, trouvant à leur tour leur mère ringarde, retomberont dans la même ornière. ■

V.A.N.

Beaucoup de bruit pour Nasser

Interdit puis autorisé après le feu vert du ministre de l'Information, le film Nasser a soulevé une tempête dans un verre d'eau. Place à présent au cinéma et à l'Histoire.

Quatre-vingt mille dollars. Mohammed Al-Nirab a failli s'en mordre les doigts. C'est à ce prix qu'il a obtenu les droits de distribution en Jordanie d'un film qui aurait pu rester bloqué dans les murs du Département de la presse et des publications (DPP). L'organe officiel de la censure avait estimé que le long métrage donnait «une mauvaise image de la Jordanie et de son rôle politique dans la région». Nasser Joudeh, le nouveau ministre de l'Information, en a décidé autrement. Après visionnage, il a jugé l'œuvre du Syrien Anwar Qowadri, convenable pour le public jordanien.

Depuis mardi, le film est donc diffusé dans trois salles différentes (Concorde, Philadelphia, Théâtre Amoun) sans coupes apparentes. La conversation téléphonique entre le roi Hussein et le roi Nasser, selon Mohammed Al-Nirab, avait suscité l'indignité de l'Inquisition d'Anastasi, semble avoir été conservée intégralement. On y évoque pourtant les événements ultra-sensibles de Septembre noir mais pas de quoi mettre en danger la sécurité nationale (la

scène ne dure pas plus d'une minute).

On se demande alors quelle mouche a bien pu piquer le DPP dirigé par Bilal Al-Tal, qui, au final, se retrouve dans la peau du rabat-joie. Est-ce le ton quelque peu intransigent de Nasser à l'adresse du souverain hachémite, qui a choqué ces messieurs de la censure ? La présence surprenante de l'émir koweïtien Sheikh Sabah dans les négociations entre Palestiniens et Jordaniens a-t-elle été jugée non-politiquement correcte ? Ou bien avait-on peur de voir rappeler les rapports distants entretenus entre Gamal Abdel Nasser et le roi Hussein ?

«Jusqu'en 1967, leurs relations s'inscrivaient dans la guerre froide arabe avec d'un côté un Nasser dans le camp progressiste et proche de Moscou et de l'autre un roi Hussein pro-occidental. Mais plutôt que d'affronter, il vaut mieux parler de compétition entre les deux régimes, pour faire triompher leur interprétation d'un certain nationalisme arabe qui fonde leur légitimité», explique Jean-Christophe Augé, spécia-

liste français de l'histoire du Moyen-Orient contemporain. Toujours est-il que Nasser offre aux jeunes générations de Jordanie une approche intéressante de l'histoire de leur pays et de leur région.

Ni prophète, ni ange

«C'est un film assez réaliste, assez complet, qui se concentre sur Nasser et l'équipe dirigeante, estime le chercheur, même si les aspects extérieurs sont plus abordés que les aspects intérieurs». Il est vrai que les affrontements égypto-jordaniens sont mis en sourdine : pas grand chose sur la répression des communistes, et, sauf l'attentat dans les années 60 contre Nasser, rien sur les islamistes, pourtant sévèrement poursuivis par le régime. Néanmoins, Anwar Qowadri ne tombe pas dans le panégyrique et souligne les faiblesses du rais : ni prophète, ni ange, mais un homme ordinaire, issu du peuple, qui souffre, aime, a des amis, une famille. Un homme, qui, très malade à la fin de sa vie, ne ménagera pas ses efforts pour réconcilier les fedayins et la monarchie hachémite en

1970. Il meurt quelques temps après la signature d'une trêve, mettant fin aux combats d'octobre.

Comme en Jordanie, le film a été également très controversé en Égypte, où la classe dirigeante actuelle hésite encore entre les louanges et les critiques du nassérisme : «La statue a été largement déboulonnée mais on n'a pas encore donné le petit coup pour la faire tomber», analyse Jean-Christophe Augé.

Plus globalement, le long métrage d'Anwar Qowadri invite à nous interroger sur les ambiguïtés d'un leader arabe, alors qu'au même moment (simple coïncidence ?) l'acteur Adel Imam singe un zaim grotesque et lubrique dans une pièce de théâtre au succès phénoménal. «Nasser a peut-être été un dictateur, mais il a été pleuré dans la rue par quatre millions de personnes, qui se reconnaissent, à tort ou à raison, en lui». ■

Ramiya Addassy, Rasha Nasser et Yannick Laine



«Nasser a peut-être été un dictateur, mais il a été pleuré dans la rue par quatre millions de personnes, qui se reconnaissent, à tort ou à raison, en lui». Jean-Christophe Augé, spécialiste du Moyen-Orient contemporain.

The Star Stadium

Edited by Abdul Hamid Addasi

Pan-Arab Games update

The 9th Pan Arab Games now has a mascot and a slogan



■ AMMAN (Star)—During a press conference recently, the 9th Pan Arab Games was given a mascot and slogan.

Talal Sataan Al Hassan, minister of youth, declared the Pink Bird—the national bird of Jordan—as the game's mascot.

Abed Hadeed, the mascot designer, happily made the design after winning the contest held by the Ministry of Youth. He was a former employee of the Ministry.

The game's slogan was revealed as well. It symbolizes sport in general, and the Arab contribution to world sport, and incorporates green, black and red—the colors of the Jordanian flag.

Will there be Athletics?

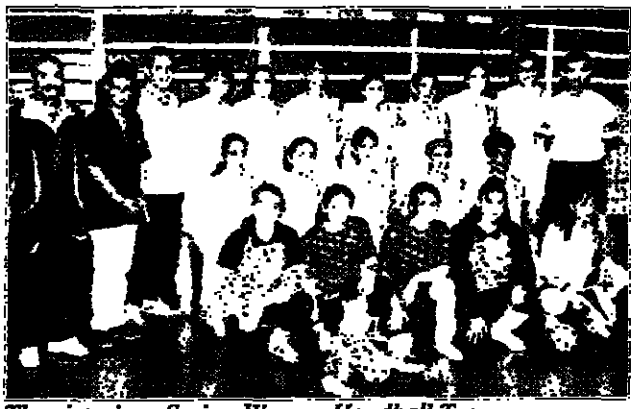
■ All the athletic events in the next Pan Arab Games are under threat of cancellation, due to a clash in schedule with the next World Athletics Championship.

Eight countries in the squash competition

■ So far, there are eight Arab countries who will be participating in the squash competition during the games.

Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan have all confirmed their attendance. In addition, three North African countries—Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia—are due to confirm their attendance shortly. Egypt currently dominates all Arab Squash competitions, but the Jordanian and Kuwaiti teams are not far behind.

Jordan cancels its football



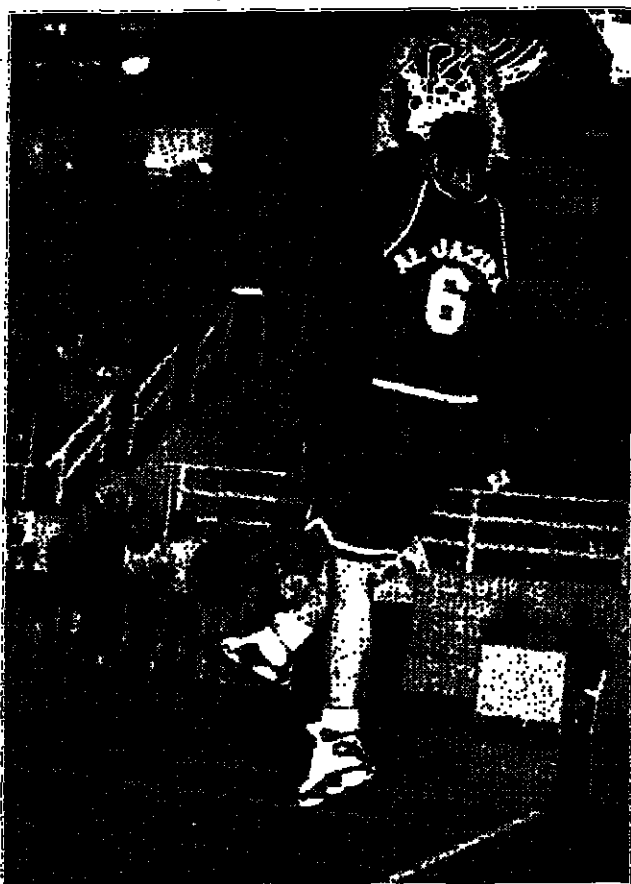
The victorious Syrian Women Handball Team



The Jordanian Women Handball Team



All the members of the Jordanian Squash Team



When will Alawneh do this for his country?

training camp

■ Jordan's football team had their preparations for the Arab Cup disrupted (The tournament is to be held in Al Doha next week). Heavy rain and bad weather conditions were the reason for canceling their planned training camp in Yugoslavia. Nevertheless, the players watched Yugoslavia and Denmark play in their Euro

2000 qualifiers, so it was not all a complete waste of time. Instead, the Jordanian Football Federation arranged immediately another training camp—this time in Egypt. Jordan will warm up with some matches against Egyptian club sides.

Jordan's Basketball team, sixth in the William Jones

■ Jordan's Basketball team took sixth place in the International Basketball Tournament held in Chinese Taipei. Asia's finest teams participated, along with a team from Costa Rica.

Jordan beat UAE, Malaysia but were defeated by Korea, Taipei (by only three points) and Costa Rica. Saudi Arabia, the Arab champions, took ninth place.

The Jordanian team faced problems due to the withdrawal of all Al Jazeera club players, after the accusation from the club that the national coach Mourad Barakat, coach to Al Orthodox club, was biased to his players. The Star hopes that this problem will be solved soon, maybe, by the appointment of an American coach.

Jordan's Women Handball team loses to Syria

■ Jordan's Women Handball team played another two matches against Syria, this time here in Amman. Jordan lost both matches, but only by narrow margins. Despite the defeats, Hizar Al Sabbagh said, "The Jordanian team performed well, proving that we are on the right track, ahead of the next Pan Arab Games."

Comets are WNBA champions again

THE HOUSTON Comets claimed their second straight WNBA championship on Tuesday, pulling away from the pesky Phoenix Mercury late in the second half, claiming an 80-71 victory in the decisive Game Three.

After cruising through the regular season with a 27-3 record, the Comets were pushed to the limit by the Mercury after finishing eight games ahead of Phoenix in the Western Conference. In the end, however, Houston's trio of stars ensured the repeat.

The League's MVP, Cynthia Cooper, scored 23 points and Tina Thompson added 18. Sheryl Swoopes, nearly invisible for the first 30 minutes, had 11 points in the final 9:13 and finished with 16.

"Phoenix was the one team that pushed our buttons and took us to the limit and really showed what they're made of," Cooper said. "They exploited our weaknesses. They were definitely tough opponents."

Michelle Griffiths scored a career-high 24 points and Jennifer Gilom had her best game of the series, netting 20. But Phoenix got nothing from Michele Timms, who finished with only two points—19 fewer than she had in Game Two. "I'm proud

of this team. I don't think there's a coach in this league that has more respect or more admiration for his or her players," Phoenix coach Cheryl Miller said. "I thought we made some plays down the stretch, trying to get to the rim and trying to get calls, and that didn't happen. That's just the way the ballgame goes."

The Mercury trailed by six points at halftime, but used a 10-2 run early in the second half to grab their first lead. Gilom drilled a pair of three-pointers and sank a pair of free throws before Umeki Webb's first basket of the game made it 41-39 with 16:51 left. Thompson ended that run, burying back-to-back three-pointers to give Houston a four-point edge.

But the Mercury responded with the next six points, as Griffiths hit a pair of foul shots and a layup around a follow shot by Bridget Pettis to put Phoenix back on top, 47-45, with 13:49 to play. "For the first time during this series, we didn't panic," Cooper said. "We didn't get down on ourselves, we didn't argue amongst ourselves. We hung in there. We knew they were going to make runs, we just didn't let it bother us."

The teams continued to trade baskets and Houston led by a

point with less than eight minutes to go. Swoopes, who had not scored since the first half, hit two free throws with 7:22 left and, after a layup by Janeth Arcain, Swoopes made a layup, giving Houston a 68-61 cushion with 6:14 to go.

Phoenix got close once more, pulling within 71-67 after a layup by Griffiths with 3:37 to go. But Arcain answered with a layup before Swoopes made four straight free throws to open a 77-67 advantage with 39 seconds remaining. "I thought Sheryl made some big-time free throws, shots and rebounds," Houston coach Van Chancellor said. "She's a big-time player."

"Our shots just didn't go down at crucial points of the game," Gilom said. "There is nothing you can do about that. We hope for every shot to go in and they didn't."

Houston, which barely escaped a lethargic first half in Game Two, came out strong. The Comets raced in front and opened a 25-15 lead on a three-pointer by Thompson with 6:47 left. They still had a nine-point cushion in the closing minute of the half before Griffiths converted a three-point play to make it 32-26 at the break. Kim Perrot finished with 13 points for the Comets, who shot 52



Cynthia Cooper holds aloft the WNBA Trophy

percent (28 of 54) and made 7 of 14 three-pointers. Houston shot 17 of 20 (85 percent) from the foul line, including Swoopes' 9 of 10. Pettis had 13

points for the Mercury, who shot 47.5 percent (29 of 61). The time expires on the 1998 WNBA season and the Houston Comets take the title. ■

Jones, El Guerrouj, Gebrselassie share \$1 million jackpot

MOSCOW—Marion Jones capped an undefeated season and pocketed over US\$ 600,000 last week by winning the 100m Sprint and the Long Jump at the IAAF Grand Prix Finals, held in Russia.

The American pulled away after a slow start in the 100m and clocked 10.83 seconds to beat runner-up Sevatheda Fynes by more than a quarter-second—a lifetime in the dash.

That victory gave Jones a third of the \$1 million Golden League jackpot, in addition to \$ 200,000 for the women's overall Grand Prix title and \$ 50,000 for the race win. She received another US\$ 50,000 for taking the Long Jump earlier with a top leap of 7.13 meters on a cool, overcast afternoon at the Luzhniki Olympic Stadium.

"I know anybody is capable of challenging me, so I have to make sure I'm on each time," said Jones, who has won all 35 events she entered in 1998, which includes 60m and 200m races. "The 100m today was a little difficult because I'm not used to jumping first and then running." Jones had to endure four false starts before taking off in the 100m. She took control after 40 meters and cruised home with both arms raised over her head. "Obviously it



El Guerrouj, in his customary pose

was unfortunate to have all those 'false starts' today," the 22-year-old said. "We don't want to be out there as long as we were. I just tried to shake each one off and re-focus."

She has been outstanding all season, twice clocking 10.71 seconds in the dash. Only one woman—world record-holder Florence Griffith-Joyner—has ever run faster. Jones only dedicated herself to track and field

two years ago, putting aside basketball, in which she helped North Carolina win the US NCAA College Championship.

Jones split the jackpot—for athletes who win their events at all six Golden League meets, plus the GP Finals—with Hicham El Guerrouj and Haile Gebrselassie, who also stayed unbeaten for the year with dominating wins.

El Guerrouj was among the

athletes who had asked organizers to switch venues because of the financial and political crisis in Russia. The 80,000 capacity stadium, the main venue for the 1980 Summer Olympics, was only about one-fourth full.

El Guerrouj ran alone for the final lap of the 1500m and clocked 3:32.03 minutes, six seconds off his best, but a full second better than runner-up Noah Ngeny. The World Champion and record holder crossed the line with his arms extended and jumped into the arms of his coach. He wrapped up the men's overall Grand Prix title.

Gebrselassie also had trouble in capturing the 3000m in a relatively slow time of 7:50.00 minutes. Luke Kipkosgei, the only athlete to threaten the Ethiopian's dominance at the longer distances this season, was second in 7:50.87 minutes.

"It doesn't matter if the money is there or not," Gebrselassie said. "The most important thing is to win and be the best." He has 20 straight outdoor wins and set world records for the 5000m and 10000m (in which he's the World and Olympic Champion) within a two-week span in June.

The only other person in contention for the jackpot heading to Moscow was Bryn Bronson, but the American faded to sixth in the 400m hurdles, as France's Stephanie Diagana won.

Diagana, the World Champion, finished in 48.30 seconds and ended Bronson's 17-race winning streak at that distance. Bronson lost steam coming off the next-to-last hurdle and struggled home in sixth place in 48.94 seconds. Dinsdale Morgan was second in 48.60 seconds, with Samuel Matee third in 48.73 seconds.

Bronson barely edged Diagana in a photo finish at Berlin the week before, to keep alive his shot at the jackpot. "It was tough for Bronson, because seven races are a lot to have to win," Diagana said. "It feels good to win a Grand Prix Final and the season this way." It's also some consolation for last month's European Championships, where he tripped in the semifinals.

The IAAF put up about US\$ 3.7 million in prize money, with \$200,000 going to each overall Grand Prix winner. The winner of each individual event takes home \$50,000. There is also a \$100,000 bonus for every new world record. ■

Europe's big guns struggle in Euro 2000 qualifiers

LONDON—The glory of the World Cup finals seemed a lifetime away for some of Europe's big guns as they misfired in their opening qualifying matches for the 2000 European championship at the weekend.

France, crowned world champions less than two months ago, could only draw 1-1 with Iceland in their Group 4 match in Reykjavik, while Spain crashed to lowly Cyprus 3-2, and England were beaten 2-1 by Sweden in Stockholm.

Sunday's action saw Bulgaria jumped 3-0 by Poland in Sofia, while Norway, who reached the second phase of the World Cup in France, fell 3-1 to Latvia at home. The Group 2 defeat was Norway's first at home since 1991.

World Cup semi-finalists, Croatia, suffered in Dublin on

Saturday when Ireland won their Group 8 opener 2-0, and Ukraine beat Russia 3-2 in Group 4—the first meeting between the two ex-Soviet republics.

Greece and Slovakia drew 2-2 and the Czech Republic struggled to beat the tiny Faroe Islands 1-0, in thick fog in Tórshavn. Only a goal five minutes from time spared their blushes.

Poland's convincing 3-0 away defeat of new-look Bulgaria prompted home fans to call for the resignation of coach Hristo Bonev after the match. The Polish team took a surprise lead with their first shot on target through Sylwester Czeszeszewski. The Bulgarians, captained by Hristo Stoichkov, kept up the pressure in the Group 5 match but again Czeszeszewski capitalised on a defensive mistake.

Tomasz Iwan struck the third goal two minutes after the break, a goal which almost paralysed the Bulgarians for the rest of the match despite Stoichkov's solo efforts.

In Oslo, Latvian striker Marius Pahars scored after just 11 minutes from a low cross against the run of play, but Norway's Stale Solbakken equalised six minutes later.

Latvia restored their lead with a goal from Andrejs Stokcers just after the break and Mihails Zemlinis effectively settled the outcome just after the hour with a penalty.

Defeat was especially bitter for new Norwegian coach Nils Johan Semb in his first major test since taking over from Egil Olsen, a national hero for leading Norway to the World Cup finals twice in a row. "A lot of things went wrong at the wrong time," said Semb. "We made some serious errors that gave them three goal chances and they scored from them. We should have scored a lot more than one goal from our 15 chances."

Also on Sunday, Macedonia beat Malta 4-0 in a Group 8 match while Portugal beat Hungary 3-1 in Budapest in Group 7.

A double strike from Sa Pinto and a Rui Costa goal six minutes from time, saw the Portuguese come back from 1-



A fifty-fifty ball, during the match between Turkey and N.Ireland

0 down to win comfortably. France's performance in Iceland seemed to confirm what many have suspected: the French won the World Cup but still lack an effective strike force. The world champions failed to shine in the tiny Reykjavik stadium but new coach Roger Lemerre said: "I cannot blame the players. They did what I was expecting from them." Captain Didier Deschamps said: "It's obvious that people are expecting more from us and we have to cope with their expectations, but we can't be at our best all the time."

England lost to a determined Swedish side despite having taken the lead after just two minutes, through Alan Shearer. Lapses in English concentration, though, allowed first Andreas

Andersson and then Johan Mjallby to score in the first half. Paul Ince's indiscipline didn't help matters. The Liverpool midfielder was sent off for a second 'bookable' offence just after the hour and there was no way back for England.

Spain were outplayed and outplayed by modest Cyprus in the Group 6 Limassol clash helping yet more pressure on coach Javier Clemente. Clemente survived calls for his resignation following Spain's first round exit in the World Cup, but knows the knives will be sharpened again now. But on Sunday he simply said: "The idea is to carry on working calmly and prepare for the next game. We're going to regroup and look for victory in the remaining games." ■



Italy's Dino Baggio gets the better of Wales' Mark Hughes

Murdoch to buy Manchester United

LONDON—Media magnate Rupert Murdoch is to buy English Premier League soccer club Manchester United.

The Sunday Telegraph newspaper reported that Murdoch's satellite television group is to buy the soccer club for \$75 million pounds (\$ 958 million).

Murdoch has agreed the cash deal with Martin Edwards, Manchester United chief executive and chairman, who is selling his 14 percent stake in the club for more than 80 million pounds. Neither BSkyB or

Manchester United were immediately available for comment.

Through Sky TV, Murdoch has made sweeping changes to coverage of soccer in Britain, with very few live games being shown on regular terrestrial stations. This further move by Murdoch could give his broadcasting company a stranglehold on the television and marketing rights to Premier League football.

Manchester United's own television network called "MU TV" is preparing to launch later this week and if the sale to

Murdoch went through, it is likely that the only way of seeing the team play would be through pay-per-view TV.

Manchester United, the wealthiest and most successful soccer club in England, was floated on the London stock market in 1991 for 47 million pounds. Manchester United shares closed last week at 157.1/2p, valuing the company at 412.66 million pounds, according to data from Reuters Securities 3000. ■

Jordan: Europe

THE STAR'S WORKSTATION COMPUTING & HIGH TECH

Edited by Zeid Nasser

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Intel's follow-up to the Pentium II, to be released sometime in 1999 500MHz and more

"INTEL HAS the capability to double the performance of its processors every 18 months," stated a computer analyst. This fact means that Intel is pushing ahead, constantly raising the entry-level processor.

As part of this general strategy, Intel is introducing its next-generation processor next year, which is expected to cost the same as the Pentium II 300MHz chip today.

Intel's successor to the Pentium II, is codenamed "Katmai" and contains 70 new instructions running at speeds in excess of 500 MHz.

Intel has spent over US\$ 2 billion on developing the "Katmai," which has underwent millions of tests.

The idea is to continuously increase the 3D performance of the processors, because that is what the markets are demanding. In home and business sectors, demand for more processing software. The 500MHz processor is also aimed at the educational software as well as entertainment video applications.

Intel is confident that its new processor will be well received by the channel, despite the concerns of some local resellers at the pace of development. What may happen is that PC manufacturers will tend to look for lower-end processors, to satisfy basic customer needs, and they may purchase these processors from companies like AMD and Cyrix. The reason is because Intel's focus on producing high-end chips will be at the

expense of lower-end chip production. In other words, there will be shortages.

Intel, however, has put a plan to counter these fears. This year, Intel realized the importance of competing more

with them. Some of the new Pentium II processors will not come in the same standard, single-edged contact cartridge format currently used for Pentium II systems.

The Katmai—the 500MHz processor—is a natural progression for Intel, and it will not cost any more to produce than the 300MHz processor.

Commenting on this "cost control" strategy, Andy Grove of Intel said that, "the processor alone is not enough, we must have motherboards and chipsets to take advantage of it in a cost-effective fashion. One of the things that we are will deliver with the Covington processor is a micro80X motherboard that contains the entire innards of the computer on a small form factor motherboard."

In the Middle East, customers can expect to see the 500MHz processor in systems by the middle of 1998, as the delivery of advanced PC systems to the region has become faster and coincides with other major international markets.

The fact that a new Pentium II series is coming out, with speeds starting at 500MHz shouldn't be a reason for buyers to pull back from the 300MHz processor, seeing as Intel's upgrade strategy for Pentium II users is based on the new black cartridge unit, which will be incorporated in the new 500MHz systems.

Ideal Systems first to unveil iMac in Amman

IDEAL SYSTEMS Co., Apple dealers in Jordan since 1987, have recently unveiled the iMac personal computer. Apple's revolutionary machine which is taking the computer world by storm.

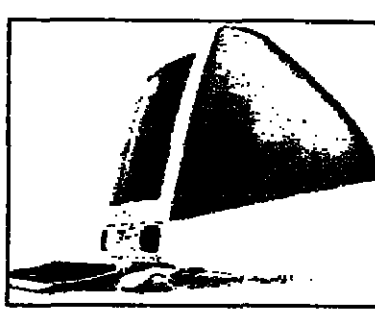
The iMac comes in a very attractive casing, stylishly designed and full of processing power! Incorporating a G3 processor, and built-in Internet capabilities, the iMac is a computer for the next century.

Apple have been overwhelmed with orders for the iMac which is aggressively priced, at around \$1,300. As of yet, official pricing

details have not been received from Ideal Systems, but it will be very competitive. In fact, the idea is to attract IBM PC compatible users to this brand new machine.

As is the case all over the world, Jordanian buyers are very enthusiastic about the iMac and have already purchased systems.

"We already had orders for the iMac before it arrived, and we expect that its sales will take off in Jordan", commented Mr. Mufid Qafqaf of Ideal Group.



the Ideal Group of companies, one of Jordan's largest information technology groups. For more information on the iMac, contact Ideal Systems on telephone 5930123.

Growth in home PCs in Arab countries

THE SMALL Office-Home Office (Soho) segment of personal computers now commands nearly 25 per cent of all computer sales traded in the Arab Gulf.

Factors fueling demand include a booming home market, the expanding base of Internet users, improvement in the price-performance ratio, and an increase in government spending on education and training.

"The Soho market is growing at an annual rate of 10 per cent and more," said K.S. Vasudevan, general manager of Peripherals Gulf, a division of SMB Computers. "Out of every 100 computers sold in the market, 25-30 per cent are lapped up by

the Soho market." Supply outstripping demand in the local market has also played its part in pushing the prices down. Vendors are bringing or have brought down their profit margin on assembled units to as little as 7 per cent but expect to cover the shortfall in volumes.

Industry watchers feel this is the right time for buyers to exercise their options. Prices of monitors and random access memory chips, RAM, have crashed to nearly 85 per cent in early 1998, which has resulted in prices of computers falling drastically. In the last few weeks, there has been some upward correction of component prices locally, says Gulf

News. The local market is witnessing more supply than demand thanks largely to the Asian economic crisis. This is likely to lead to an increase in gray marketing of low-end products, particularly components into the UAE and the other GCC states," said Prashant Saikham, research analyst, IDC. According to IDC, approximately 60,000 units were shipped into the UAE in 1997.

In Saudi Arabia, approximately 140,000 computers were shipped in 1997 while shipments to Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman and Qatar totaled 65,000 in 1997.

News update

US figures for 97 show Compaq in the lead

● In 1997, Compaq topped the sales of personal computers in the United States, accounting for 16 per cent of the market. Dell came in second with a 9.5 per cent share, followed by Packard Bell/NEC at 8.9 per cent and IBM at 8.9 per cent. Gateway 2000 was estimated to have a market share of around 7 per cent, while all other PC suppliers accounted for the remaining 48.8 per cent.

The total units sold in the US in 1997 were 31 million.

JoinNet special Internet packages
● The local Intranet Service

Provider, JoinNet, is providing aggressive packages for customers with a lot of free promotions.

Subscribers who utilize a discounted, one-year Intranet plan will get a free fax modem, a free Internet training course, five Internet addresses, five web pages on the Internet.

For more information on JoinNet, check out their web site: www.joinnet.com.jo.

METS '98 in November

● The Middle East Technology Show (METS) '98 is being organized by the Jordan Computer Society (JCS).

It is to be held in November this year and already has

a considerable number of participants. In fact, the organizing committee expects this show to be bigger than previous years.

METS brings together Jordan's major information technology companies and exhibits all the latest in hardware, software and accessories.

The event is Jordan's prime computer show and represents an excellent opportunity for buyers to find special deals. Most exhibiting companies will have special discounts for METS.

So far, sponsors of METS include PC Magazine Middle East, ARAMEX, JTC and others. METS will receive extensive coverage in The Star, so stay tuned.

INTERFACE

BY ZEID NASSER

The future: Software 'coding' in Amman

JORDAN'S SOFTWARE development firms are going through a transformation. By moving away from the production of ready, off-the-shelf packages, they have shifted into the "big league" of software development. Expertise gained by a number of firms in the areas of "small software" is producing positive results in other areas of software development, which are more profitable and through which the skill and know-how of our developers can best be exhibited.

Software firms like IdealSoft, Comsoft, Zeine Technological Applications and others have taken on a number of specialized software activities. This has coincided with a growing need for locally tailored software solutions. Today, there are major local companies and industries which require large information technology installations. This means a huge software base is to be put in place, to run the activities of these companies.

Managers have learnt that they cannot make do with an average software package, and that the degree of customization required is quite comprehensive to an extent that a typical software system for a garments factory, for example, which covers all aspects of the business would require some 8 months to a year of development time, at the very least.

So, Jordan's software development firms have risen to the challenge, utilizing a number of "core" applications like Oracle and advanced development languages including C++ at its highest levels. Within the past year, Jordan's software firms have had to expand their staff and acquire advanced programming tools, to meet with the greater requirements and the results seem encouraging, so far; but their is still a long way to go before our local software houses effectively provide comprehensive solutions, built from the ground up, and delivered on time to customers. This is where regional or international cooperation could be quite useful in the software sector, and it should be encouraged now especially as the intellectual property rights laws have been passed by the Jordanian parliament.

There is a need to adapt internationally established software systems, by customizing and tailoring their features to suit customer needs, instead of building whole new systems from scratch. Already, this trend is catching on among major Jordanian corporations, whose management and information technology consultants have opted for the adoption of "imported" systems. In all these cases, Jordanian corporations paid tens of thousands—if not hundreds of thousands—of Jordanian Dinars for software from abroad. How can our local software experts benefit from such major installations? This is the question that needs to be asked. If software produced by foreign companies will dominate or local and regional markets, then the only way to generate income for Arab software developers is to get them into the "international development chain."

This means that the services of our developers have to be contracted by foreign firms, providing them with the opportunity to work on producing software "code" in Jordan, for example, for a finished product that will be released from the United States. In other words, our expertise, coupled with relatively lower programmer wages, should drive the export of Jordanian software skills, which will act as an input in foreign products! Already, countries like India and Pakistan enjoy excellent income from their software industries.

Why should we go as far as South Asia, our next door neighbors, Israel, make millions and millions of dollars every year from "exporting software technology"? It makes sense that we can do the same or even better! There is a general need for guidance in the local software industry, along with some form of official support or patronage to direct our strengths in a manner that will benefit Jordan.

If we wait too long, all our skilled programmers will already have moved to Gulf states, where governments and businesses take the matter of software development very seriously.

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Mad about that Barbie doll!

I'M A Barbie girl! Barbie was introduced at the American Toy Fair in New York City in February 1959 by Ruth and Elliot Handler, who are founders of Mattel Toys.

Ruth originally thought of the idea while her daughter, Barbara, was playing with paper dolls. She realized that as her daughter grew older and began to imitate adult conversations and the world around her, she needed a three-dimensional representation of it as well.

She shared her idea of a doll with a woman's figure with her husband and the all-male executive team at Mattel, but they refused saying that it would be too expensive to produce and the retail price would have to be higher than the consumer would pay.

She again approached them with the idea after returning from a trip to Europe with a Lilli doll, a German doll produced in the mid-fifties. Lilli, however, was modeled after a sultry, almost pornographic caricature in a German comic strip; she was a far cry from the innocent, all-American image Ruth wanted to capture, and it was Mattel's job to change that.

Several trips to and from Japan finally ended with a deal that changed the pursed lips, widow's peak, and heavy make-up of Lilli into an embodiment of the quintessential American teenager, created to "project every little girl's dream of the future." Barbie appeared at a time when the term "teenager" was a "new and rather sexy one." The country had been through two world wars and a depression, and the fifties presented a time for young adults to come into the limelight. But it was questionable whether or not the American public was ready for a doll with a woman's figure. Her earliest fashions adhered to the philosophy "the doll sells the clothes and the clothes sell the dolls." Regardless of whether Barbie was cooking or socializing, she was acting a part little girls began to notice; she was teaching women what was expected of them by society.

For these first-generation Barbie owners, she taught independence...[she was] her own woman and could invent herself with a costume change. She had already earned herself a high degree of respectability and became a figure girls wanted to emulate; she was not only a fashion model, she could be a sophisticated or a homemaker. Soon it was evident that despite Ruth's original desire to have each child create a personality for the doll, Barbie began to have an identity of her own. Ken was an important addition to Barbie's world as a reflection of the majority of society's attitudes. Mattel was against the introduction of Ken because male dolls had not historically fared well in the market, but requests for a boyfriend for Barbie were endless.

Criticism of the couple was bound to arise, but Ken's role involved much more than Barbie needing a date for Friday night. Granted, Barbie may not have been a women's rights activist in 1961, but she was a reflection of women's roles in society at the time.

These roles were often defined by the men in women's lives; they were happy with raising families and being housewives, nurses, and hostesses. The couple's relationship exemplified the contemporary attitudes of teens who were celebrating peace and prosperity.

Moreover, critics should have realized that her boyfriend was still only a mere accessory. Barbie and Ken's ensembles were named for recreational activities and for the outfits themselves because the American mindset was not about men and women competing for careers in the job market; it was a time for sock-hops and drive-ins.

It would have been outlandish for Barbie to have outfits named for her many careers because most women were not concentrating on a career other than raising a family. Barbie portrayed an alternative, a life before marriage, without discarding the traditional values that accompanied this lifestyle; she transformed, poised and proper behavior, and made it glamorous.

Inevitably, these roles would soon change, and Mattel would refashion Barbie to conform to these standards. One can see the imminent evolution of Barbie's wardrobe, personality, and image as a social revolution appeared on the horizon.

Mothers buy Barbie in hopes of not only presenting entertainment, but positive reflections of society and femininity. Barbie leads a balanced, albeit busy, life; her goals are socially acceptable ones. She allows children to use their imaginations in an ultimate fantasy world but also gives them realistic dreams for which they can aspire. Barbie has remained a prominent figure because Mattel has correctly assessed what it means to a little girl to be a grown-up. And this has all happened because a woman wanted her daughter to have more to play with than paper doll.

Barbie Facts

Things you wish you didn't know! Barbie is a two billion dollar industry. Two Barbies per second are sold somewhere in the world. Barbie is sold in more than 140 countries. Since her debut in 1959 there have been more than a billion Barbies sold. The original 1959 Barbie sold for \$3.00, in mint condition it can bring in up to \$4,500.

The average American girl between 3-10 years old owns eight Barbies. Fifty-four other dolls have been designated as Barbie and Ken's family and friends. Barbie has had a meager life of more than 35 pets, which has included 16 dogs, 10 horses, 4 cats, a parrot, a chimp, a panda, a lion cub, a giraffe, and a zebra.

Close to a billion fashions have been introduced for Barbie and her friends since 1959. Barbie has more than billion pairs of shoes. She has her own magazine called "Barbie's Bazaar". There is a Barbie Hall of fame in Palo Alto, California.



"Deep Blue Sea" uses the "Titanic" film set in Mexico

By John Ward Anderson

ROSARITO, Mexico—Four frantic scientists in wet suits struggled with a heavy, watertight restraining door after their deep-sea laboratory—under attack by genetically enhanced, man-eating sharks—sprang a series of leaks. Cannon-like blasts of sea water spewed through the holes, pummeling the scientists and threatening to sink their platform.

Renny Harlin, giddy with excitement, could contain himself no longer. A huge smile spread across his face. His eyes blazed. His arms flapped. He was almost speechless. Almost. "Is this fun or what?" the film director blustered. "We can do anything here!"

Welcome to Hollywood's newest playground, a \$30 million seaside movie studio/water theme park, custom-built by director James Cameron two years ago for the filming of his blockbuster epic, "Titanic." This place was supposed to be torn down after Cameron finished shooting. However, the 35 acre studio—including a 17 million gallon "infinity horizon" water tank built on the Pacific coast of Mexico—was simply too unique and expensive to scrap. It now is the largest, most state-of-the-art facility for making water-based movies in the world, and a huge economic boon for the nearby, slightly dog-eared beach resort of Rosarito, just south of the Tijuana border crossing.

"A lot of people haven't waken up from the dream. It's like having a little Hollywood in your back yard," said Antonio Escobedo, a state tourism official in Rosarito who has been brushing up on Hollywood hype and hyperbole. "The sleepy town, the quaint village is no longer. We're going to be like Southern California. We're doomed to prosperity."

Town officials and executives from 20th Century Fox—which built and owns the studio, known as Fox Studios Baja—estimate that Cameron's "Titanic" project pumped as much as \$80 million into the local economy. It also created a spinoff cottage industry of Titanic Burgers; a Titanic glass shop and bakery; Titanic T-shirts, drinks and seafood platters; and a small Titanic museum at the studio with props and other memorabilia from the filming.

For months, local residents and tourists watched from a nearby highway as a 775-foot model of the ill-fated luxury liner seemed to sail and then sink in the studio's eight-acre, 3.5 feet deep tank, built on a bluff high above the Pacific. The tank had a "seamless edge," so it appeared that the boat was steaming through the vast ocean beyond. "It's incredible that Cameron got Fox to build such a set for one movie, but I guess they're getting it all back now," said Harlin, director of the action-suspense movies "Die Hard 2: Die Harder" and "Cliffhanger" with Sylvester Stallone. "Titanic," which cost \$200 million to make, is the highest grossing movie ever, surpassing \$1 billion in box office receipts worldwide. It is scheduled for release on video Tuesday.

"This is a dream place, there are no limitations," Harlin said of the coastal studio, which Warner Bros. has leased for about three months to film "Deep Blue Sea." Harlin's \$70 million shark thriller starring Samuel L. "Action" Jackson and LL Cool J. The movie is scheduled for release next summer.

"When you are filming on the open ocean with 200 crew members, it's completely uncontrollable," he said. "You've got the current going one way, the waves going another and the wind taking you in a different direction. And every time the boat moves, the sun and shadows move too. You have to double your shooting schedule. We're saving probably 50 percent by filming here." Besides, he

confessed, "I love not being in L.A. If you're on a studio lot, you have to deal with all the agents and executives."

In addition to the filming facility itself—the Fox Baja tank is twice as big as similar tanks in Malta and Australia—the temperate climate and cheap labor costs of Mexico's coastal state of Baja California Norte are important draws, officials said. "In Australia and Malta, everybody gets sick there, and we've had none of that here," said Tony Ludwig, a "Deep Blue Sea" producer. "Because of the proximity to L.A., the studio can see the dailies (unedited film that was shot) the next day. It's no different from being in Burbank. And the food and margaritas are phenomenal."

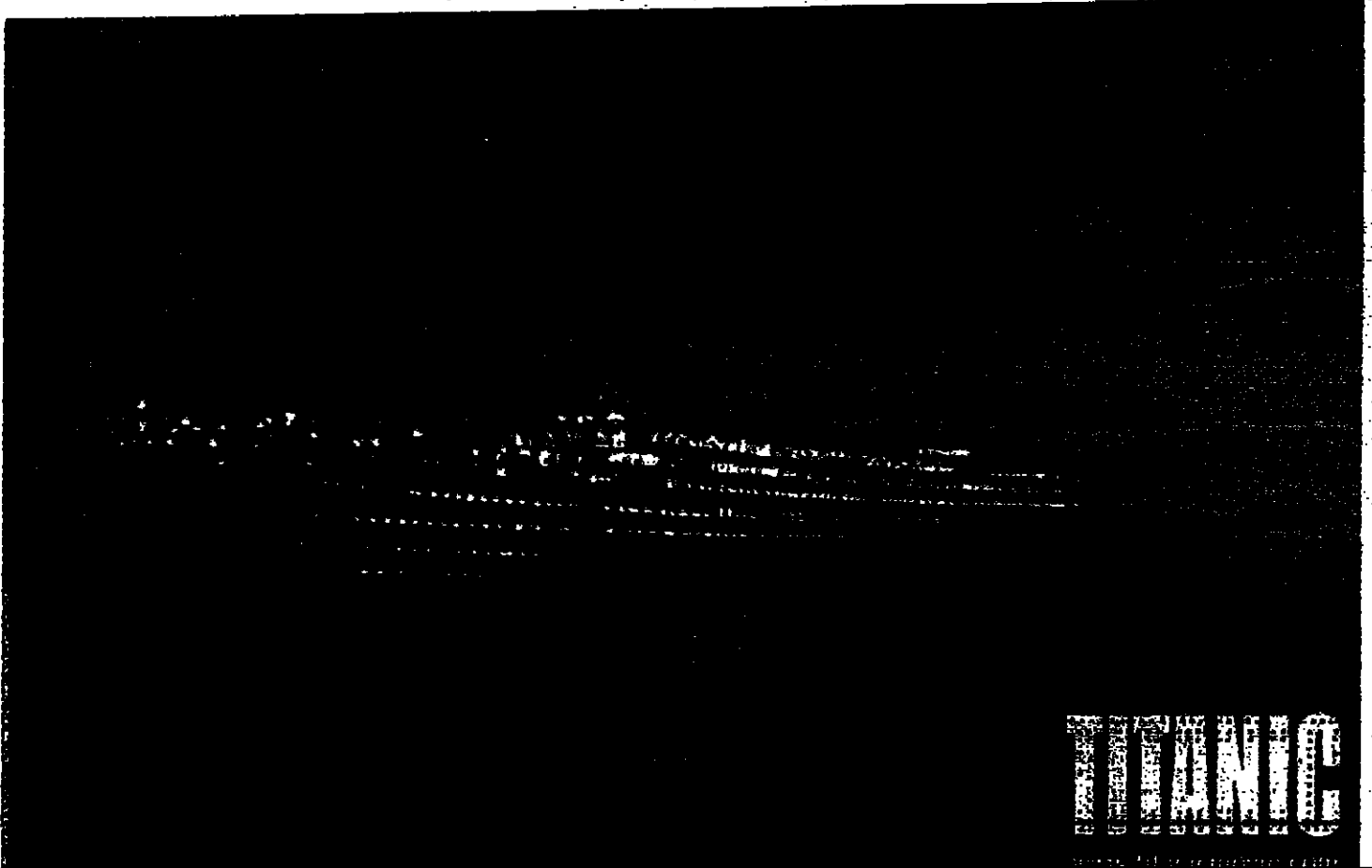
Besides, said Escobedo, the state tourism official, "They never would have been given a permit in the US to build a studio right on the ocean. The environmentalists are too tough." But since Rosarito was incorporated as a city

three years ago, local officials were anxious to accommodate the studio and help diversify the local economy, 90 percent of which relies on tourism, officials said.

The studio employs 56 local Mexicans full time when there is no production. "But on 'Titanic,' we had 400 Mexicans working on set construction," said Charlie Ameson, general manager of the studio. "We hire local painters, plasterers, carpenters, cleaning crews, and we try to buy all of our construction materials locally."

"Right now, there are 300 (hotel) rooms being taken up by the crew of 'Deep Blue Sea,' and they're eating one meal a day outside of the studio, and they're all shopping locally," he added.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service



Film director Kurosawa dies

By Richard Pearson

Akira Kurosawa, 88, the legendary Japanese movie director who combined Japanese history and culture with Western stories that acclaimed worldwide attention, died Sunday 6 September, at his home in Tokyo after a stroke.

Kurosawa gained international fame in 1950 for "Rashomon," which won the 1951 Academy Award for best foreign film as well as the Golden Lion of the Venice International Film Festival for best picture. His 1954 film "The Seven Samurai" received the Venice Film Festival's Silver Lion award.

His second Oscar was in 1975 film "Dersu Uzala," and won the 1980 Cannes Film Festival Grand Prize for "Kagemusha." In 1985, the Cannes Festival awarded him a special trophy for achievement after the release of "Ran." In 1990, Kurosawa received his third Oscar, a special prize for lifetime achievement. He was quoted that he had not yet really earned it.

Others disagreed.

American filmmaker Steven Spielberg hailed him as "the pictorial Shakespeare of our time." "Kurosawa is the only director who right until the end of his life continued to make films that were recognized as or will be recognized as classics."

French President Jacques Chirac, an authority on Japanese culture, called the late director "a master" whose work represented "major milestones in the history of international cinema." "He was enthralled by modern Japan but familiar with its epic poetry. He knew how to denounce injustice and praise self-sacrifice." Kurosawa's work was accessible to Westerners because of his sources. His films included stories based on the works of Feodor Dostoevski, Maxim Gorki, William Shakespeare and American crime writer Ed McBain.

Kurosawa often featured soundtracks of Western symphonic music. The director also made clear his admiration for such Westerners as Jean Renoir and John Ford.

Film historians point out many technical Kurosawa achievements. He was a pioneer in the use of the long lens and quickly moving multiple cameras, as well as the use in

Japan of both Panavision and Dolby sound. His insistence on realistic portrayals of violence, including swordplay, is said to have influenced action filmmaking in both this country and Europe.

His stories were all based in Japan and dealt with some of the watersheds of Japanese history, as well as such Japanese concerns as honor and integrity.

But whatever his influences or techniques, Kurosawa always insisted that he was simply trying to tell a story as well he knew how.

"Rashomon," which resulted in international acclaim for the director, was a psychological study of the complexity and faults of the human mind set in feudal Japan.

He made "Ikiru" (To Live!) in 1952 which hailed by some critics as a masterpiece, about a lowly Japanese bureaucrat who is to die shortly of cancer. Kurosawa's 1954 "Seven Samurai" was an affecting tale of seven unemployed samurai warriors who defend a group of peasants in Japan during the 16th-century. It was remade as a Western in 1960 as "The Magnificent Seven."

Back home, the director ran into troubles just as the rest of the world was hailing his genius. In addition to falling out of style, the director also had become known for his semi-dictatorial ways by the insistence on artistic freedom and disdain for budgetary restraints.

In 1980, it took financial help from 20th Century Fox, to make "Kagemusha" (Shadow Warrior). Then, in 1985, he made "Ran," the film he once described as his life's work, obtained French backing for the film, which ended up costing more than \$10 million. It was the most expensive Japanese film to that time and was a critical and popular hit.

Kurosawa was born in Tokyo into a former samurai family and attended the Tokyo Academy of Fine Arts. He entered the film world on something of a lark and found himself studying under the Japanese film master Kajiyo Yamamoto. His wife of 35 years, the actress Yoko Yaguchi, died in 1985. Survivors include a son and a daughter.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

Royal Falcons



AMMAN (Star)—The Royal Falcons team returned home recently after a long tour in Europe which included England, Germany, Holland, France, Italy, Switzerland. It took about three months. Captain Shummaq, said the team presented six shows in these countries, and was the only team from the Middle East. "The first show was in Woodford, the team was applauded by huge crowd in there."

The second show was patronized by Prince Faisal Al Hussein. However, the third fly show was on the beach of Woodford and seen by more than one million people.

After that the team moved to Germany then to Paris, and joined in the celebration on the occasion of the 75th year since the establishment of the

French air force. After that the Royal Falcons went to Switzerland and to Italy. The team were seen by millions of people during what can only be called a European tour.

The Royal Falcons was established under the auspices of Her Majesty Queen Noor.

